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Over the Top?

As this issue of *Dissent* goes to press, the biannual fund drive, on which our survival depends, seems to have gotten off to a good start. But we can't yet give any useful figures, since our "lead time"—the time between editorial preparation and publication—is rather long. Final figures in the next issue.

Meanwhile, we ask those friends who haven't yet sent in their pledges and/or contributions to do so quickly. It's *the margin* that makes the difference. Most of the money has to go for routine expenses: printing, mailing, and so on. But if there's a little left over, we can do some promotion and take editorial initiatives.

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AT FIRST GLANCE

Murray Hausknecht

A specter is haunting American capitalism—the specter of unrestrained greed. So it appears from a story by Anne Crittenden in the *New York Times* (August 19, 1984). She reports the fears expressed by many academic and business luminaries ranging from Nobel Prize economist James Tobin to Felix Rohatyn, the literary lion of Wall Street. The article's subhead reads, "... America's corporate chiefs are losing sight of moral standards in the new frenzy to get rich quick." This view is shared by the public at large; last year less than a third of all Americans "rated corporate executives 'excellent or good' in ethical practices."

The complaint has been heard before. Herbert Hoover said, "The only trouble with capitalism is capitalists; they are too damned greedy." The current spasm of breast-beating has been triggered by a recent wave of mergers and takeovers involving—says an anonymous speculator Crittenden talked to—"a whole class of instigators and parasites [who play] a very destructive role in the economy."

The public's attention has been caught less by the economic consequences of greed than by the sheer brazenness of it all. There are, for example, the golden parachutes that careful managers devise to protect themselves when a battle turns against them. When William Agee of Bendix attempted to take over Martin Marietta and was taken over by them instead, he resigned. But he had guarded against this contingency by arranging to be paid $4 million when he departed. In this battle, incidentally, Martin Marietta publicized a juicy tidbit about Agee and Mary Cunningham, a Bendix vice-president, which until then had been savored only in corporate offices and country-club locker rooms. All's fair in love and war.

Sometimes an executive is pushed by colleagues who remain solicitous of his welfare. The chairman of a Chicago bank whose investment policies eventually forced a federal bail-out "left the bank under a cloud ... but with a hefty six-figure annual pension in hand plus a cash payment worth $280,000 and his club dues taken care of for a year." Nice work, if you can get it.

More recently, another injudicious banker, in California this time, "was granted a $2 million severance payment before he agreed ... to leave ...." The deal "angered" his successor and federal officials, but there was little they could do since the money had speedily been deposited in a Swiss account (*New York Times*, September 18, 1984). On the other hand, the biblical injunction, *to those that have shall be given*, seemed uppermost in the minds of Ford's directors when they awarded their chairman a bonus of $7 million in a year when thousands of auto workers were laid off and wage concessions were extracted from those who remained. Even the Heritage Foundation, bastion of right-wing intellectuals, thought this action "unseemly."

There also are the raiders who make their profits from greenmail. After Saul Steinberg showed up at Walt Disney Productions waving 11 percent of its stock and threatening to blow its doors down, the nervous management bought the stock back at a price that left the wolf with a tidy little profit of $60 million. Rupert Murdoch, whose *New York Post* tirelessly extolls the virtues of free enterprise, profited from a similar maneuver in a challenge to Warner Communications.

Not all capitalists succumb to their baser natures. Charles Brown, head of AT&T, asserts, as Crittenden writes, that "hundreds and hundreds" of executives "are emotionally involved in the companies they are running." Crittenden also reports that "one of the most successful investment managers in the postwar period is heartened by such phenomena as the Full Gospel Business Fellowship of 72,000 businessmen who meet ... once a week for breakfast and prayers." Skeptics are more apt to believe that businessmen who pray together at breakfast will also prey together the rest of the day. Skeptics also will remember that the godfathers of

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organized crime are noted for their emotional involvement with their families' enterprises.

THE BEHAVIOR OF BUSINESSMEN has rarely been controlled by inner restraints; it is the threat of legal sanctions that regulates behavior in the marketplace. But today Reaganism encourages, in Tobin's words, "the undiluted pursuit of self-gain." And consequently, according to Alan Greenspan, the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers in the Ford administration, "the covers [are removed] from the more unsavory types of people." Edward Herman, a Wharton School professor, told Crittenden that the 1970s saw the rise of "a lot of new rich ... the oil barons and the new California guys around Reagan." They believe the government has no legitimate role to play in the economy and do not work with it or through it. "They have a simpler ideology, based on a desire to dismantle the welfare state." Like all businessmen who achieve a dominant voice in policy decisions, they have become "abusive," and in the past this has led to political reactions and legal reforms. The same thing will happen now, says Professor Herman, but not "until we have a huge blow-up."

The consequences of the "blow-up" are clearly at the bottom of Felix Rohatyn's anxieties. He believes that the present takeover battles are "wilder than in the '60s—business is killing the goose that laid the golden egg. If we don't put some curbs on this we're going to see a tremendous backlash." Rohatyn too expects a recession that will set off an enormous "hue and cry.... You'll have congressional hearings, the works. It will be a large and distinguished cast of characters."

Adam Smith was another moralist with a low opinion of business ethics who posited self-interest as the energy powering capitalism. He justified, metaphorically speaking, the pleasure principle in economic behavior. Providence would ultimately insure that all would benefit from each entrepreneur's self-interested action. But the divine hand turned out to be palsied; the anticipated advantages of self-interest could only be realized when its excesses were curbed by governments that forced a wider distribution of material benefits. A mature, flourishing capitalism, then, is ruled by a reality principle; the dominant political forces learn to mediate between the demands of self-interest and the requirements for social tranquillity.

The deep-seated, powerful energies of the economic pleasure principle are not easily repressed; periodically they overcome the forces of prudence. Today "the oil barons and California guys" are the vanguard of the latest eruption of those ruled by the pleasure principle. Reaganism, the 20th-century echo of Guizot's cry, *enrichissez-vous*, represents their triumph, at least for the moment, over the restraints of the reality principle. Rohatyn and others who deplore such excesses can do little except wait in trepidation for their worst fears to be realized.

THIS METAPHORICAL DRAMA within the business psyche exposes what, from another perspective, may be called the ironies or "inner contradictions" of American capitalism. Reaganism as ideology and practice is a paean to the unregulated market and a naked attempt to return to a mythical state that exists only in the minds of ideologues. But those with a firmer knowledge of history than the new rich from Texas and California know that capitalism survives only where there is a regulated market and where private enterprise submits to at least some public guidance and control.

When the Reaganites, whatever their intentions, try to dismantle the welfare state, they are striking at the roots of modern capitalism, for only the welfare state can compensate for the shortcomings of the Invisible Hand.

Meanwhile, that Hand is busy—grabbing. □

WELCOME ABOARD!

At its last meeting, the Editorial Board of *Dissent* added and welcomed these members:

MITCHELL COHEN, who teaches political science at Baruch College, CUNY, is the outgoing editor of *Jewish Frontier*.

NICOLAUS MILLS's books include *The New Journalism, American and English Fiction in the Nineteenth Century*, and *Busing USA*. He is at work on a study of the Mississippi Summer of 1964.

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FRED SIEGEL is the author of *Troubled Journey: From Pearl Harbor to Ronald Reagan*. He teaches history at Cooper Union. □

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Four More Years

We print below some hasty remarks on the election result, written a few days after the election. By the time you read these, you are likely to know more than did these authors. Still, first impressions may have their value. In the next issue, we'll be back with more considered analyses. — Eds.

1. Irving Howe

Of postmortems there will be no end. What follows is less ambitious, a mere personal response written three days after the election.

• It was a severe defeat. There are a few consoling features, most of all the failure of the Republicans to take the House of Representatives. There are a few positive facts: the nomination of a woman for national office, the large-scale entry of blacks into politics, the steadiness of the Jewish vote despite the Reaganite flirtation of the *Commentary* crowd.

But a defeat it was, and it cannot be explained simply by citing President Reagan's popularity. That popularity itself is a sign and consequence of conservative moods—can you imagine a Ronald Reagan being adored at a moment of liberal upsurge? That a man of such mental limitations should become a national hero can only be attributed to his intuitive skills at reaching and sharing the sentiments of many Americans, sentiments clearly in opposition to liberalism (to say nothing of the left).

Remember that two years ago, when the recession was at its worst, Reagan's popularity ratings were lower than those of Carter at his lowest. The economic recovery—partial, fragile, and with an explosive potential for serious trouble in the next few years—was evidently crucial in shifting many votes to Reagan. But this isn't enough of an explanation. What the economic recovery did was to free many people of their immediate anxieties about livelihood and enable them to turn their attention to such less tangible but emotionally charged matters as "national pride," abortion, and "strength."

• There is a wish throughout the nation to restore the United States to a pristine condition it never had, a wish to pull it out of the bloodying realities of recent history. There is a wish to undo the trauma and moral shame of the Vietnam War, to stem the advances or changes in "life style" of the last few decades, to recover an image of this country as unmarred and unshaken. America as the home of traditional values, cozily partnered by God; America as the showcase of individual enterprise; America as the toughest nation on earth—and we showed them in Grenada, didn't we? (All this, I suspect, barely hides a deep anxiety about personal futures and national well-being; but meanwhile, Dr. Feelgood, the Hollywood medicine man, strokes and assuages and uplifts.)

That this sincerely felt vision, part of the post-Vietnam reaction about which Nicolaus Mills writes elsewhere in this issue, is a concoction of fantasy and yearning may be true. But it has worked brilliantly to veil the increasing power of business, its grasping greed. More and more, American democracy is being debased in behalf of American plutocracy.

• Let us recall briefly what the Reagan heritage really is—and if you know it only too well, skip to the next point. It is a heritage of:

brutal cuts in help for the poor;

an increased percentage of the population falling into poverty;

the most severe recession in America since the Second World War;

tax legislation redistributing wealth in the direction of the rich;

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a National Labor Relations Board so biased in favor of business that some unions have simply stopped taking appeals to it;

pandering to the most benighted prejudices in the country, such as those of the Moral Majority;

systematically thwarting (with the help of the Soviet bureaucrats) any effort at arms control;

fostering a mindless militarization that channels vast resources wastefully to the Pentagon;

sanctioning an illegal "covert" war against Nicaragua with CIA directives that propose the use of fascist-Stalinist methods.

The list could be expanded for pages.

ALL OF THIS HAS LED to a new atmosphere in the country. We are living through a moral reaction. The reigning values are those of crass acquisitiveness, proud selfishness, and callous indifference to the suffering of others. All too many people seem to feel no shame about their Social Darwinist posturing. They take pride in its assertion, as if manliness were macho, and arrogance individualism. Sentiments of community shrink; sentiments of compassion elicit ridicule. The representative figure of this *Zeitgeist*, the hero of our time, is J.R.

• Perhaps the most alarming trend—and one that I see no immediate way of coping with—is what I'd call the degeneration of the democratic process. TV "debates" that aren't debates at all but by their very structure make superficiality and slickness inescapable; 30-second "spots" that corrupt intelligence; constant stress, begun by the media and passively taken over by masses of viewers, on the "performance" of candidates rather than on their opinions or programs; the influence of pollsters in shaping opinions they are supposed to chart; and the sheer power of money to dominate elections—these are facts that ought to be troubling serious people of every persuasion. Our public life grows emptier and emptier.

• The largest defeat in the election was probably suffered by the labor movement, which gambled heavily on Mondale and lost. More serious, still, is the fact that the labor leadership could not hold the political allegiance of almost half its membership. No doubt, there are all kinds of reasons for this, ranging from an antifeminist backlash to delusionary notions about military strength. But the unions would be doing themselves a disservice if they did not think hard and long about the seeming alienation between leadership and the ranks, evidence that over years of relative well-being the leaders have failed to educate, day by day, their own members. A major reinvigoration of the unions is needed, something easy to say but by no means easy to accomplish.

Meanwhile, it seems likely that labor's influence within the Democratic party is going to decline—indeed, the first visible effect of Reagan's landslide on our political life may well be a rightward shift by the Democrats, both within and outside of Congress. The time of "neoliberalism" has come—that amorphous creed which cannot now be dismissed out of hand, even though some of the social attitudes associated with it irritate people like me. (See, for instance, Morton Kondracke in the *New Republic* and the *Wall Street Journal*, where he describes himself as a "neo-lib, neo-con," as if to disarm critics in advance.)

Criticize the unions, urge upon them a range of self-transformations—fine. But at this moment, when they have been battered by recession, the collapse of major industries, and a hostile administration, every liberal and democratic leftist with a touch of fellow feeling will want to show solidarity with the American unions.

• As for the intellectuals, what has begun as a rightward shuffle could now turn into a stampede, with the "herd of independent minds," as Harold Rosenberg once caustically described them, taking conservatism to their hearts as 15 years ago many took New Leftism. And what will happen a few years from now—just as after the collapse of the New Left? "How," many will ask themselves, "how could we have been so self-deluded as to be caught up in this epidemic of foolishness?"

• Serious people will beware of instant analyses declaring basic political realignments. Some, of course, we can see. The disastrous racial split in Southern politics, with all-too-many whites signaling their prejudices through the Republican party, indicates a breakdown of one of the (less attractive) pillars of the New Deal coalition. And major social-technological changes make it unlikely that certain industrial centers in the Midwest will soon, if ever, be able to regain their political power.

Does this mean, however, a final breakup of the New Deal coalition? I'd be careful before agreeing to that notion. The social components and organizational supports of the New Deal coalition will probably never again be what they once were. A new liberal coalition will require new inner relationships. But the fundamental ideas and values that animated the New Deal coalition—really, a liberal-labor coalition—remain as valid as ever. Let there be a year or two from now the kind of recession we had in the midst of Reagan's first term, and everything will look different. Many of the people

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mouthing phrases about free enterprise will be screaming for government intervention in our socioeconomic life. The welfare state has been battered, but much of it survives; the struggle for its defense and extension will continue.

HARD TIMES LIE AHEAD. American liberalism is in grave trouble and so, almost as a corollary, is the democratic left. Liberalism will reassert itself, in full vigor or pale ambiguity, for the roots of liberalism in America run deep. We may expect the "natural" oscillations of our politics to recur, bringing an opportunity for liberal renewal. But not automatically. American liberalism will have to wake up from its comfortable doze and start afresh.

The danger for both liberals and democratic socialists is clear—yield to the rightward drift and thereby annul your reason for existence or insulate yourself in a cell of fundamentalist righteousness. About strategies and tactics we should be flexible. About ideas we should be receptive. But about the values by which we live—our criticism of the status quo, our belief in democratic social reform—we should be unyielding. □

2. Joseph Clark

President Reagan won a smashing victory. Yet despite the magnitude of the Republican triumph the Democratic party was not reduced to smithereens, even though, in some places, only small pieces of it remain, especially in the South and the West. Nevertheless, as we all have observed, the Democrats increased their Senate seats by two. In Congress, they kept the GOP from regaining about half of the 26 seats the Democrats had taken in 1982, thus retaining a majority that should be able to frustrate the further advance of Social Darwinism.

This brings us to a series of reasons, cited by many, that did play an important part in the Reagan sweep. In my view, however, they are not sufficient to explain it.

• *The Reagan Teflon quality* enabled the president: to pile up the greatest deficits in the nation's history while demanding a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution; to champion children's government-sponsored prayers in the schools, while he himself does not attend church, explaining this omission by citing the dangers that would threaten churchgoers if he joined them; this, however, did not stop him from donning a yarmulka and conducting an assault on the Democrats in a synagogue—apparently Jews don't face the same menace Christians do when Reagan visits their house of worship.

The consummate ability of this veteran of more than a half-century of crooning before microphones surely advanced his expertly stage-managed campaign. Mondale, obviously, was not as effective on TV.

• *The failure of the media* to grapple with or challenge the president's outrageous claims, misdemeanors, and assertions. This has a long history. When the Ku Klux Klan, knowing full well what it was doing and why, endorsed Reagan in 1980, he refused to disavow the KKK for two whole weeks. The press then called President Carter "mean" for raising the matter. And after the conspicuous silence of the press was broken just a bit, Reagan rejected the KKK when confronted by a reporter. In 1984, the media let Reagan get away with the claim that he had supported voting-rights legislation. This, despite the two years of his acquiescence in the efforts of Senators Helms and Thurmond to block reenactment of the historic legislation won under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. Race was a dirty little secret that surely played a role in Reagan's success. The dreadful polarization reflected in the massive white Southern vote for Republicans while more than 90 percent of blacks voted for equal rights is something that will have to be "overcome" in the years ahead.

• *The media's amnesia about the 1982-83 recession*, deeper than any since the 1930s' Depression, was surely helpful to Reagan, even though it was the recession that he used to bring down inflation.

• *In the matter of "standing tall,"* and elevating our country's position in the world, imagine President Carter getting away with what Reagan did when nearly 300 Marines were massacred in Lebanon, and when our troops beat one of the hastiest retreats in American history after Reagan had promised the nation this would not happen!

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• *The sleaze factor*, especially in Reagan's Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Labor, received more tender treatment in the media than vice-presidential candidate Ferraro got in the matter of her husband's real estate business. The media battering in this instance left hardly any room or time for coverage of the historic event—nomination of a woman as the candidate—and a dynamic candidate at that. Even the coarse insults by Vice-President Bush brought little response, let alone indignation in the media.

• *The fundamentalist right wing*'s leading role in the Republican campaign received little coverage in media reports. Anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism marked their history, but their part in the fight against abortion rights and for ending the separation of church and state were welcomed at the Dallas GOP convention. These modern Elmer Gantrys formed the pool to which Reagan gave the honored title of "Ecclesiastical Advisers." He consulted them about Armageddon, when all who are good and pure ascend to the bosom of Jesus Christ, and which, Reagan tells us, can happen the day after tomorrow or in a thousand years.

THESE AND SIMILAR REASONS have been offered for the Reagan victory. Without for a moment underrating these factors, it seems to me that none of them, or all in combination, could have played a decisive part but for four other causes.

• First and foremost was the economic recovery that commenced without increasing inflation of retail prices. Most Americans seem to feel that they are better off now than they were four years ago. Here Reagan's "success" is fraught with dangers for the future—such as continued mass unemployment, the huge trade deficit, and the astronomical budget deficits. In matters of economics, it has been correctly suggested that the successes rather than the failures of the welfare state have been factors in the spread of conservative ideology. Opposition to government spending characterized the comments of many who had weathered previous depressions and recessions with the help of the "safety net" provided by the social legislation of the Roosevelt New Deal and subsequent Democratic administrations. Admittedly, the failures of the welfare policies did have their negative effects, chiefly the inflationary impact of government programs.

• Second, one factor has been underestimated by progressive parties and movements—at least since 1848, when a rousing and influential manifesto informed the workers of all lands that they had no country of their own. It may boggle *our* minds, but Ronald Reagan successfully projected the myth of American strength and power. He could do this because he was not adequately challenged by the Democratic campaign on the issue of the nuclear arms race.

In this regard a recent Yankelovich study reveals that, by 96 percent to 3 percent, Americans assert that "picking a fight with the Soviet Union is too dangerous in a nuclear world." The study also found that an overwhelming majority believes no one can win a nuclear arms race. These majority views exist alongside a determination that America must remain strong and must not "lose the arms race." Yankelovich also found that the dominant attitude of Americans is not to call for "an anti-Communist crusade," but a "live-and-let-live" pragmatism.

Perhaps the most bizarre aspect of Reagan's success in creating a myth of himself as a strong leader of a successful nation is his victory over Grenada—a "nation" of 90,000 without an army or navy. Veterans of Anzio, Omaha Beach, and the Battle of the Bulge, not to speak of Guadalcanal, are supposed to appreciate the new strength of an America that was able to triumph over Grenada! But like it or not, unless liberals associate the social struggle with national interest, with patriotism and pride in our country, it will be hard to prevail against mythmakers like Reagan.

• A third and vital reason for Reagan's victory is that the young generation of the 1980s has taken cruel revenge on the youth of the 1960s. One of the saddest aspects of the rise and fall of the more extreme youth movements in the second half of the 1960s was their contribution to the decline of radicalism as a factor on the American political scene. Among the staunchest supporters of Reagan at the polls in November were the young people between 18 and 30. They didn't opt for the values of the youth of the 1960s, who chose the appearances and images of poverty rather than the organization of movements of labor and minorities dedicated to a war on poverty. Even in their opposition to the Vietnam War, many of them (and most of them naively) weakened the fight for peace by association with the Communist side in that most dreadful and unjust war.

• Finally, a fourth reason is the weakness and failures of the Democratic campaign. The San Francisco convention was a positive and successful beginning; the failure to follow it up with a campaign imbued with its spirit and momentum was puzzling. Mondale's definite victory in the first

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debate was not matched in the second. He allowed Reagan's misstatements and prevarications to go by without challenge and, above all, he did not challenge Reagan's nuclear policies effectively.

On economic issues, the Democrats failed to put forward a strong program and agitation in behalf of jobs, industrial rebirth, and progress. Mondale's emphasis on the necessity for more taxes (true enough) became a source of weakness in the campaign; the Republicans could paint the Democrats as the party of high taxes for the ordinary citizen. After all this is said, it's hard to see another Democrat who might have done better against Reagan. There's considerable feeling that Mondale is very much a "nice guy." But one is reminded of Leo Durocher's comments about what happens to nice guys. In the second debate, Mondale did not go for a decisive attack, and one was called for.

• There were developments that can only serve a better future in the political battles that lie ahead. Whatever the backlash against the labor movement, it is still a force that must be reckoned with in political action at all stages of a campaign. In this one, organized labor did win a great part of its membership for the Mondale-Ferraro ticket. Of historic proportion is the role of blacks on the political electoral scene. And thanks to Mondale's initiative, women can no longer be excluded from presidential politics. As a matter of fact, the traditional Roosevelt coalition did reappear: Mondale won the black vote 90 percent to 9, the unemployed 68–31, Jews 66–32, Hispanics 65–33, big-city voters 62–36, union members, 57–41. Yet all of these don't add up to a majority. But if most of the great mass in the middle—including Yuppies and the middle class—see their interests as aligned with the others in the coalition, the political wheel can turn around in 1986. □

3. Jeremy Larner

(1) television is never in itself decisive. I learned this in 1972, when New York's most notorious TV operative confided to me how he would make John Lindsay president. In '84, the two debates showed Ronald Reagan as a man whose touch with reality is tenuous. Mondale, on the other hand, pulled himself together with grace, bite, and self-control once the nightmarish Democratic selection process was over. The voters preferred Reagan, not because his voice was more soothing, but because that soothing voice was telling them they didn't have to worry. America, he said, is a land of God-given "destiny"; the pursuit of self-interest creates deserved prosperity; and by "standing tall" as John Wayne would do, we can keep the rest of the world in place. Reagan won, not by the media, but by his message.

(2) On election day, I canvassed a rundown black neighborhood in Oakland—where Mondale workers were warmly greeted. The most depressing sight was the clusters of young males hanging out on streetcorners. One 18-year-old challenged me—"Who's stronger? You can't say Mondale!" I said, "You'd be more likely to have a job." He said, "I got me a job!" I said, "What about your friends?" He said, "I got to look out for myself, man!" I thought, perhaps at least he will make it out of here. I said, "What kind of job?" He said, "I'm in fast food"—with a grin that let me know he, too, knew he was stuck. He, too, was voting for Reagan because of what he couldn't face.

(3) The Democrats will spend somewhat more money, but neither party is ready to deal with the problem of what has become a permanent black underclass—or even talk about what this does to our cities and our lives. Jesse Jackson used black votes as a means of promoting himself and intimidating Mondale—which made it easier for whites to vote for Reagan as a means of resentment and denial.

(4) The majority of American voters prefer, as of this moment, to go for what they can get and deny human and global interdependence. Both parties play into this with endless variations of the "tough" stance, abroad and at home. The alternatives are painful to contemplate because they do not lend themselves to unequivocal positions. A really skillful Democratic candidate would have to work out a way of saying—"Listen, folks, the human race might be on the way to destroying itself—and there

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are no simple solutions"—and yet to get Americans to vote for him on the basis of his honesty, his commitment, and his grasp of the real difficulties. The odds might be against him—but if he won, he might win enormous possibilities.

(5) The Democratic party itself doesn't want to face this—and in a presidential election turns itself into a shambles of backbiters and interest groups that command few troops. The question Democrats can no longer answer is, What good does it do the average person to become a Democrat—and to what does he then belong? The answer must be, A world that has the maximum chance of decency . . . and therefore, survival. A group for whom the achievements of civilization involve tolerance and cooperation—and a well-documented suspicion of the workings of unchecked greed. A group that recognizes that we must keep working in politics not merely to make things better—but to keep things from getting worse. The leader we are looking for would be a man who can convey the crucial importance of how we live and work in relation to others.

(6) The politics of jingoism and superiority ought to be ruthlessly reported and derided. But since Watergate, a general cynicism has focused the press on the personal strategies of candidates winning votes. Reagan knew—and Mondale didn't—that a candidate only undermines himself discussing strategy. And as for the ego-tripping aides who love to get themselves interviewed on what they are going to try next—they should be immediately fired.

(7) In short, the next great Democratic politician will be the man who develops the language to tell us —as citizens who are not isolated from the acts of other citizens, and as a nation that can no longer simply ignore or exploit other nations—how we can be at our best. Or we may not be at all.

Is there a way to say this so that Americans will accept it? □

4. Carol O'Cleireacain

The author, who recently became a member of the Dissent *editorial board, serves as associate director in the Department of Research and Negotiations of District Council 37, AFSCME, in New York.*

What happened? Ronald Reagan beat Walter Mondale by 59 percent to 41 percent in the popular vote, carrying a majority of every age group, of both sexes, and of every income class above $10,000 per year. Union members supported Mondale over Reagan by 53 percent to 47 percent, not a significantly different performance than in 1980. In the identifiable demographic groups going for Mondale—blacks, Jews, and Hispanics gave considerably greater proportionate support than did union members who, at about 26 percent, make up a larger share of the electorate. The economy, evidently, was the major issue influencing voters to reelect Ronald Reagan. With money in their pockets, goods around to spend it on, and prices not rising out of control, voters saw no reason to turn out a pleasant man with a nice smile.

Has there been a restructuring of American politics? Definitely not. Americans are still splitting their ballots in large numbers, electing largely Democratic state and local governments and a Democratic Congress, while going Republican for the presidency. Reagan's large popular vote did not transfer to other candidates, neither improving the long-term viability of the Republican party nor ensuring him an easier Congress with which to work.

• The 1984 election seems most clearly a personal victory for an incumbent president presiding over an economic recovery. Could this have been prevented? At several points in his first term, Ronald Reagan was beatable but not, I think, by November 1984. When the labor movement chose to endorse Mondale, Reagan's prospects—and the economy—looked worse.

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Labor has always been fairly realistic about its ability to produce in a political operation. We can make a difference in a reasonably balanced race. We can make up for the other side's more abundant money by using volunteer labor, phone banks, bodies on the streets, printing, and so on. However, no one believes that we can fight a tidal wave, be it for Ronald Reagan or Jesse Jackson. When a candidate has a huge momentum, all one can do is try to limit the damage. The labor movement's endorsement and hard work clearly made Mondale the nominee. Was that a mistake? Some may think so. But former Glenn and Hart workers have told me they don't think either of them could have beaten Reagan. I agree.

• There were problems, certainly, with the campaign. Where were the resources of the Democratic party? Where were the campaign workers, the bumper stickers, the information leaflets, the posters, and the campaign offices? In New York City, it was simply the labor movement. Labor had the only organization; the only phone banks; the only postering until the night before the election; the only subway information leafletting; the only bodies on the streets. Mondale carried New York City, but not by enough to carry the state.

Even with the campaign's problems (and they were nothing compared to the problems of the Hart campaign in the primaries), Mondale was a heroic candidate by the end. He waged a strong fight and got the issues out. Those who voted for him did so without the lack of enthusiasm many felt when voting for Carter in 1980. But Mondale faced an incumbent who held the ultimate card.

• I don't think labor did wrong in pushing for the Mondale nomination. Labor has as much right as any other group to participate fully in the Democratic party's selection process. I hope we will continue to be a strong, united force in future primaries. In this campaign labor was reacting to having had to support a loser—Jimmy Carter—with whom it was dissatisfied last time. How quickly we forget! If the AFL–CIO had not made an early endorsement, its largest and most politically active unions would have done it—so the real impact on the primary campaign would have been similar. No, the early and vigorous support of Mondale, a decent man and a committed friend of labor, was not an error.

But labor could not deliver enough of its members against Ronald Reagan. The target this time was to get the labor vote for Mondale above 60 percent. In 1976, Jimmy Carter drew 61 percent of the union vote against Gerald Ford. He lost 14 percentage points of that support in the 1980 election, with that loss dividing almost evenly between Reagan and Anderson. This year, with no significant third-party candidate, Reagan marginally increased his union share and Mondale picked up most of Anderson's labor vote.

• There are two basic responses labor will have to muster to our failure in the campaign. The first is to concentrate even harder on improving our political skills and the political apparatus. All this is so bitterly serious—especially if one believes that, ultimately, labor may be all there is out there to carry on the cause. This will mean a concentration on developing professional as well as rank-and-file political operations. But the ability of the union to affect members' political choices and activity is a day-by-day job, not just an election-year task. Union literature is not enough. Activists need to be developed. Rank-and-file members are the most successful force for making other members understand the importance of political action. The second response must be to find out why the erosion is happening in our ranks, and to devise a strategy to get members back to the political fold. That will be hard work.

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN FOR THE future? First, as a trade unionist, I foresee Democratic presidential candidates with an eye on the large non- and antiunion population, candidates wary of overt labor support. They will want our apparatus, the unions' bodies, and the financial help. Some will not want endorsements; they will prefer a backroom deal. However, with the press anxious to label labor a "special interest," and with public campaign financing, such privacy is not possible. The candidates need us, and our support will be known. The open issue is whether the labor movement, with an increasing stake in the results of the campaigns, will be content with a role as the "bodies," while others pose as the "brains."

Finally, as an economist, the future seems to me to depend on how long it takes the economic bubble to burst. If the deficits are presently keeping the

COMING—IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

Thinking About Socialism

by Irving Howe

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unemployment rate artifically low and the exchange rate of the dollar artificially high, thus keeping down inflation as well, then we may be in for both increased unemployment and inflation when our deficit problems are finally tackled. Sounds familiar? Like the economics of 1980, the economics of 1986 may bring an election devastating to the incumbents. □

David Bromwich

Our Outrages in Nicaragua

November 11, 1984

Smuggle a thousand rifles, submachine guns, and grenade launchers into the 20 largest American cities, distribute them among known criminals, ex-cops, the hard core of left- and right-wing lunatic sects, and assure a continuous supply of ammunition and tactical intelligence, leaving behind the simple order: *Disorganize; disrupt; create chaos.* What would the result be? Very quickly, life in our cities would become intolerable. Violent incidents would be the order of the day, on subways, in buses, or merely walking down the street. Citizens would begin routinely staying home from work. Many would complain about the inefficiency of the government. Most would still hope for its victory, and do what they could to assist it, but with some bafflement about their fate. The smugglers of arms (they would say to themselves) are so rich, so far away, so irresponsible. Why do they destroy us and then point to the effects and say we are destroying ourselves? How can they set about wrecking our society, and then call our society a wreckage?

All this could happen in the United States. It would not require subtlety or courage from the foreign power that tried it; only an ideology virulent enough, and a readiness to exploit the adventurism of brutal agents. This, of course, is precisely what the United States has begun to do in Nicaragua. We have deployed "advisers," native guerrillas, and mercenaries in a terrorist war against a government that, a few years ago, overthrew the most rapacious dictator of our hemisphere. Historically, to some extent we are now following the precedent of Vietnam in 1962–63. But a fairer analogy is Spain in 1936. Then, too, a legitimate government was opposed by rebels, on whom a factitious legitimacy had been conferred by interested foreign powers. Then, too, the government was charged—by the church above all—with real abuses of power, and the rebels said that it did not represent the will of the people. In 1936, that cry was taken up by fascists throughout Europe. Fifty years later in America, we are more delicate. We say instead that the Nicaraguan government is not "keeping its promises to the people." We treat the pledges of a revolution as if they were election promises, and we feel a young country ought to see the importance of these. That the Sandinista leadership includes several Communists has especially piqued our conscience. And so the United States—the United States of the Guatemalan coup and the Bay of Pigs—has gone South again to give a lesson in democracy.

Our democracy at home is what its name implies: a government elected freely by the people. But it looks as if our democracy-for-export were a rather different thing. Now that the CIA instruction manuals have been publicized in the country that hired their author, we can see what the export consists of. It is a compound of anarchy and terror: a policy of plunder, kidnap, and assassination. It is aimed not at the correction of injustices (something never yet attempted by these means), but the destruction of the very possibility of civil society. What end do we foresee beyond the destruction? If

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you ask Ronald Reagan, he is surprised that you should ask. The end will be a government like ours: peaceful, equable, just. After we have taught them murder, we will teach them restraint. But can it be so easy to turn outlaws into citizens? The president's answer is plain. We must be prepared to stay in Nicaragua longer than we thought; as teachers only, that is; as moral guides. □

Nicolaus Mills

The New American Grandeur

For a while it seemed as if it would take less than a decade to put Vietnam behind us. It was not just that we had finally signed a peace treaty with North Vietnam, but that debate over the war had ceased to be divisive. One might, if one's political leanings were conservative rather than liberal, call the war a tragedy instead of a mistake, but the upshot of both views, especially in the late 1970s, was the same. No one wanted a new war in Asia or a renewal of the draft.

The time for healing apparently had arrived. A Vietnam Memorial—honoring the dead but not the war—was approved for the Constitution Gardens in Washington. Hollywood, with such films as *Coming Home*, helped legitimize a new hero, the wounded vet who opposed the war. And in such writings as James Fallows's "What Did You Do in the Class War, Daddy?" the college generation that once had led the antiwar movement acknowledged that in no small measure its protests had come at the expense of a working class unable to escape the draft.

This healing mood is terribly distant now. As the 1980s reach midpoint, nothing has begun to shape our national life so much as a militant reaction against the feelings of "weakness" that defeat in Vietnam produced.

Ronald Reagan has capitalized more on this change than any figure on the American political scene, and in a speech delivered at West Point in 1981 he summed up the new mood perfectly when he declared, "The era of self-doubt is over. We've stopped looking at our warts and rediscovered how much there is to love in this blessed land."

But this mood has not been created by Reagan. It is deeply woven into our national consciousness and in practice constitutes nothing less than a commitment to a New Grandeur. At home it means a celebration of supply-side economics, an assertion that what counts is not our unemployment or declining industrial base but the prosperity that has recently come to so many sectors of the corporate world. Abroad it means ignoring the threat of nuclear war and finding safe occasions to exercise our military might. But above all, the New Grandeur means purging the "shame" of defeat in Vietnam and reviving the memory of America in the years between the end of World War II and the death of John Kennedy.

THE NEW GRANDEUR may be described in these terms:

Athletic Nationalism • This is something quite different from the emphasis on fitness that has inspired the jogging craze. Athletic nationalism centers on the idea of a once-weak America proving itself physically superior to the rest of the world, especially the Third World. The recent Olympics were proof of how far the country was prepared to carry this kind of nationalism.

At Los Angeles, American teams were not simply content to do well. Against inferior opposition they often ran up huge scores, and in such sports as swimming, where the American team's stock of world-class swimmers was overwhelming, they took advantage of that too, entering a second string in qualifying relays and a rested first string in finals.

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The result was an emphasis on winning that showed no sense of restraint. Audiences chanted, "U.S.A., U.S.A.," like students at a high-school rally; television announcers openly rooted for American teams; American athletes seemed to feel naked unless they were waving or wearing an American flag.

To the smaller countries we defeated, especially in such previously weak American sports as gymnastics, the vaunting of our athletic programs was clear. But to the TV audiences that had watched the American army defeated by pajama-clad Vietnamese and American diplomats held hostage by Iranian students, the Olympic victories carried a second and more important message. "Man for man" we are still "better" than the rest of the world, they said. In open competition they remain our inferiors.

Acceptable Imperialism • In the post-Vietnam world, the lessons of Vietnam cannot be totally ignored. We have had to accept limits. Invade Angola and risk getting bogged down in Africa. Invade Iran and risk the lives of hostages. Do much more than mine the harbors of Nicaragua and risk the Vietnamizing of Central America. But Grenada offered none of these problems. Grenada was a safe bet. An island with a population equal to Albany's, it had no significant army. And at a time when the terrorist bombing of the Marine base in Beirut had revived memories of America as a helpless giant, it presented itself as the perfect target for invasion. The overthrow of its pro-Cuban government by a second government we opposed was a dubious excuse for such an undertaking, but in the context of the New Grandeur such considerations were beside the point.

John Lewis

Mississippi Freedom Summer — 20 Years Later

John Lewis was one of the early leaders of the civil rights movement, and especially active in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). He is today a member of the City Council of Atlanta, Georgia.

The America of 20 years ago experienced one of the most moving and exciting times in our nation's history. It was a period of hope but also of pain and suffering, of crisis and confrontation.

The sit-ins, freedom rides, and the civil rights movement in Birmingham where Police Commissioner Bull Connor met peaceful demonstrations with fire hoses and snarling police dogs, and the murder of three civil rights workers in Mississippi had created a moral and political climate demanding meaningful legislative action.

In the fall of 1963, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) conducted a mock election in Mississippi to dramatize the fact that there were only about 22,000 black people registered out of a black voting-age population of more than 450,000. Over a two-day period, almost 200,000 black citizens throughout the state gathered in churches, community centers, barber and beauty shops to cast their votes for Aaron Henry, a leader of the NAACP in the state, "for governor," and the Reverend Edwin King, a white chaplain at Tougaloo, a predominantly black college, "for lieutenant-governor." This mock election did point out the fact that if black people could vote, they would. Some whites had argued that blacks in Mississippi didn't want to participate in the democratic process. At times, all conceivable means were used to keep blacks from registering to vote.

After the mock election, we began to recruit students, teachers, lawyers, doctors, ministers and others to come to Mississippi and spend the summer working in the Freedom Schools. People were taught how to pass the so-called literacy tests, how to read and write, in order to register to vote.

THE MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SUMMER was an attempt to bring the nation to Mississippi, to open up the state and the South and bring the dirt of racism and violence from under the rug so all of America could see and deal with it. By June 1, 1964, we had more than 1,000 brave people spending the summer in Mississippi to work toward the building of an interracial democracy in the South.

Before the summer project was in full force, three of the civil rights workers—Michael Schwerner, a 24-year-old social worker from New York, James Chaney, a 21-year-old Mississippi black, both members of the Congress of Racial Equality, and Andrew Goodman, a 21-year-old student volunteer from New York—were missing. They had been

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What Grenada provided was a chance to show that if we didn't have to worry about political complications, we could be decisive. Grenada could not undo the political complexities of Lebanon, but it could repair the frustration of Beirut. And in awarding (as if this, too, were an Olympic event) no less than 8,612 medals to those involved in the Grenada campaign, the Pentagon showed it knew what the invasion was truly about. In an age of constraints, it had found an acceptable imperialism.

The Unrepentant Vet • In the crippled vet John Voight plays in *Coming Home*, we had the new hero of the first post-Vietnam period. His wisdom consisted in the belief that he was seduced into fighting a war that should never have been fought, and in his crippledness he reminded us that his wisdom had come at terrible cost. He made us feel bad about the war, but in the 1980s he has also become the kind of veteran we wish would have the grace to spend the rest of his days in a VA hospital.

The unrepentant vet of the New Grandeur has no such doubts about Vietnam and, as a stock character on prime-time television, he lets us know that we shouldn't either. For those who want to forget Vietnam, there is the beach-bum detective of *Magnum, P.I.* (Tom Selleck), who makes it clear that post-Vietnam America is so filled with opportunities to lead the easy life that any vet with initiative can make a place for himself. And for those who want to remember Vietnam positively, there is *The A Team.* A commando unit that served a brief term in prison on trumped-up charges, the integrated A Team shows how powerful a handful of Americans can be when the wraps

assigned to work out of Meridian. They left Meridian to drive about 50 miles to a place near Philadelphia in Neshoba County to inspect the ruins of a church that had been used as a Freedom School, and was burned down a few days earlier. Stopped for speeding by the deputy sheriff, they were arrested, jailed, fined, and released.

The news of the three missing civil rights workers created a sense of outrage.

In early August, the missing young men were found. Andy Goodman and Mickey Schwerner had been shot in the head. James Chaney had been brutally beaten to death. Near the end of 1964, the FBI arrested the same deputy sheriff and 20 other white men for participating in the crime, but the charges were dropped. Three years later, with additional information and a change in the political climate in the state, the deputy sheriff was convicted for engaging in a conspiracy to murder them. He served about four years in prison.

I met and knew these three young men briefly. All of us experienced a great deal of pain as a result of something like this happening in our own country. I often think of these three who gave their lives in Mississippi so black people could register to vote.

To win the right to vote meant passing literacy tests and facing lynch mobs. For black people, the right to vote cost a great price. Someone had to face hostile local officials and go to jail. Winning meant standing in unmoving lines outside county courthouses, facing abuse and hostility, losing jobs and homes just for the right to participate in the democratic system.

After the murders, we lived in Mississippi with the constant possibility that something could happen to any of us. During the summer many churches were bombed and burned, particularly black churches in small towns and rural communities that had been headquarters for Freedom Schools and for voter registration rallies. There was shooting at homes; we lived with constant fear. We felt that we were part of a nonviolent army, and in the group you had a sense of solidarity, and you knew you had to move on in spite of your fear.

I think for many of us, that summer in Mississippi was like guerrilla warfare. You knew that you had to prepare yourself, condition yourself, if you were going to be there. You knew that you were going to stay for a period of time, and there were going to be disappointments and setbacks. What we tried to instill, particularly among the young people coming down, was that even as they came there, we weren't going to change Mississippi in a summer or a year, that it was a much longer effort. In a sense we went down to help the people there, but no doubt they helped all of us a great deal; no question about that. Some of us literally grew up overnight because of being in positions of responsibility where we had to make decisions, we had to act.

I have often been asked what it felt like to participate in such a movement. I can remember many emotions—fear, anger, and sadness, but also hope, love, and compassion. Most of all, there was an all-pervading sense that one was involved in a movement larger than oneself, almost like a Holy Crusade, an idea whose time had come. □

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are taken off and they are allowed to play by the enemy's rules.

Whether saving innocent Americans from organized crime or rescuing foreign governments from Communist revolutionaries, the A Team demonstrates weekly that Green-Beret tactics can be used to clean up the world. For TV audiences that spent a decade watching news footage from Vietnam, it comes as a relief from the real thing, and it has the added pleasure of being directed against an enemy that doesn't fade into rice paddies each evening.

Monumentalist Architecture • It is called Renaissance Center, and it certainly lives up to its name. Designed by John Portman, the Atlanta-based architect responsible for that city's Peachtree Center, and occupying a 33-acre parcel of river-front land, its five circular towers loom over poverty-ridden Detroit like a gleaming Fort Apache. What the $350-million Renaissance Center represents is, however, something more than Detroit's effort to recover from the 1967 riots that saw more than 14 square miles of the city go up in flames. Although completed in 1977, Renaissance Center embodies the principles of New Grandeur architecture.

With its luxury office space and hotel rooms, the Renaissance Center does not promise to stop crime or house the poor. It offers instead haven from a hostile world, and that is its whole point. In an era preoccupied with legitimizing power and affluence, it says one can build without being trapped by urban complexities. In the midst of Detroit, where the mirror-glass and concrete walls of Renaissance Center are a barrier to the surrounding slums, the fortress quality of Renaissance Center is its most conspicuous quality.

But in terms of the architectural direction of the New Grandeur, what makes Renaissance Center so important is the overall case it makes for monumentalism. Detroit's strategy is now New York's strategy as well. If the cleanup of the Times Square theater district goes as planned, it will be accomplished through a series of massive hotels and office buildings; and a little further uptown, the new monumentalism is also safely in place. In an already overbuilt area, three new buildings—Trump Tower, the IBM Building, and the new AT&T headquarters—loom over 56th and 57th Streets. Given zoning concessions in exchange for the space they provide the public, the buildings do little to improve a section of the city already dominated by expensive stores. What they assert is that money and bulk talk. With enough of both, even in New York a corporation can erect a building that calls attention to itself and through a combination of colonnades, atriums, and indoor shopping malls creates a world all of its own.

The Deserving Rich • For Ray Hicks, the disillusioned Marine of Robert Stone's *Dog Soldiers*, what is most striking about the America he returns to is how shabby it has become eight years after Vietnam Day. Even the bars he used to hang out in have taken a turn for the worse. Hicks's intuitive feelings are not inaccurate. For the poor and minorities, life in America has gotten worse since the 1960s. As a recent report from the Congressional Budget Office makes clear, between 1983 and 1985 families earning less than $20,000 a year will lose $20 billion in income, while those earning $80,000 or more will gain $35 billion from budget and tax cuts.

But what is most important in terms of the 1980s is the political message behind this strategy. It represents the heart and soul of the New Grandeur, and what it says is that America can be the powerful America we admire even if we have to endure an extended period of unemployment and deindustrialization. What we need in order to maintain our leadership in the world is the assurance that those at the top of society are guaranteed the financial incentives to continue directing the country.

AFTER DEFEAT IN VIETNAM and years of stagflation, it is hardly surprising that the country should opt for a New Grandeur that puts such an emphasis on the trappings of power. A sense of authority is what the nation has missed, and it is in this direction rather than toward a new egalitarianism that it has instinctively moved. The pattern is familiar. It was visible a century ago in the South where, after Reconstruction ended, the plantation ideal dominated the culture, and it is a pattern evident in our own century in European nations that have lost their empires.

In the 1980s the result is a political situation William James described with extraordinary insight three-quarters of a century ago in his essay "The Moral Equivalent of War." There James suggested that the country overcome its vision of itself as weak with a peacetime dedication to goals that required the sacrifice and discipline expected of soldiers in war. The difficulty is that, then as now, those best able to advance the idea of a moral equivalent of war have not been progressives. They have been politicians drawn to imperial wars and attracted to the martial values of power and conquest rather than sacrifice and discipline. This was the case at the turn of the century with James's

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peer Theodore Roosevelt, whose vision of the "strenuous life" made the Hunter and the Rough Rider presidential images the nation identified with. And this is the case now with Ronald Reagan, who with John Wayne confidence assures us that "America is on the move again." □

Jim Sleeper

"Tipping" in Housing: A Hard Case

Suppose that all of New York City's black middle- and working-class housing developments were plagued by crime and management neglect. Then a recent court settlement upholding "occupancy controls" in Brooklyn's Starrett City, the country's largest federally subsidized housing development, might make more sense. Starrett's management insists that it must keep its minority population at roughly 40 percent in order to forestall white flight from the "inevitable" deterioration a black influx is supposed to bring. Integration isn't just an admirable idea but, as Jefferson Morley put it in defending Starrett's quotas in the *New Republic* (July 9, 1984), "a practical necessity" to protect current black residents as well as whites—even if that means relying on stigmatizing quotas that buck Starrett City's waiting list, which has many more qualified blacks than whites seeking its pleasant apartments.

There are compelling arguments for integration and perhaps even for the Starrett settlement, but blacks' putative need to live in integrated developments in order to be protected from themselves simply isn't among them. Nor is it clear if, and from what, whites would be "fleeing" were Starrett to accept, on a racially first-come, first-served basis, the many "model" applicants it could cull from the 9,000 minority families on its waiting list of 14,000. Starrett could screen them by nonracial criteria that courts have upheld and that black residents have been the first to demand and to use successfully in many developments where they predominate.

Instead, the centerpiece of the solution hammered out last May in Federal District Court, which effectively preserves Starrett's race-based occupancy controls, is a political accommodation. It finds scant refuge in principles of affirmative action, if we define it not as integration at a particular location but as the broader access to decent housing and jobs, which is a precondition for real integration in the long run.

Starrett City's gleaming towers and neatly landscaped grounds are home to a community of 15,000 with its own public school and shopping center. Starrett was built in 1973 at the outskirts of Brooklyn as part of New York City's answer to the suburban exodus—an effort to hold the middle-income tax base.

This splendidly isolated "new town" was also a response to racial change in the neighborhoods many of its residents had left behind. "A monument to fear" was how some critics described Starrett, with its original quota of 30 percent for minorities: local politicians feared losing white votes they needed to stay in office, and the Starrett Corporation (then flirting with bankruptcy) feared a threat to profitability.

None of these fears were spurious, least of all those of Starrett whites bludgeoned out of their old neighborhoods by black crime and the many effects of disinvestment accompanying blacks' arrival. The rage of anyone mugged once too often is unanswerable. Yet now qualified minority applicants who'd had nothing to do with that crime—and often suffered it themselves—were enduring discriminatory treatment from Starrett management. White families obtained apartments in two months while blacks languished for 20 and more.

Starrett management's assumptions were clear, and Morley summarized them:

> If the minority population . . . grew much larger than 30 percent, Starrett would almost certainly "tip"—

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whites would begin to move out. . . . Starrett was sure to attract black tenants. *But if it wanted a stable middle-income project, it had to attract—and keep —a larger number of whites.* [Emphasis added.]

"Racial tipping," in short, inevitably brings instability and decay.

Does it? There is a different scenario that also is based on New York's experience. Yes, whites might move out as more blacks arrive, but they might well be leaving a Starrett City as exemplary as the middle- and solid working-class black communities of Esplanade Gardens, Lenox Terrace, Riverton, River Bend, Atlantic Plaza Towers, and others whose success is apparently unknown to most commentators. If, as these examples make clear, site-specific integration isn't always a precondition for black stability, then the demise of integration at Starrett would have to be weighed against the gain for working- and middle-class blacks of thousands of decent apartments in a housing market that has limited their dwelling options more severely than those of the admittedly hard-pressed whites.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITY, NOT INTEGRATION, was certainly the primary goal of five black plaintiffs who brought the class-action suit on behalf of the 9,000 minority applicants on Starrett's list. Preserving integration, desirable though it might be, could not be the primary goal, if achieving it meant limiting the housing options of disadvantaged yet deserving blacks, while catering to the fears of whites whose options are marginally greater. New York State did agree, as part of the Starrett settlement, to open up 86 of its overwhelmingly white developments in New York City, but at a pace so slow (20 percent minority occupancy by 1999) that few of Starrett's aggrieved black applicants can expect relief.

Yet Starrett management's defenders won the day by insisting on the negative consequences of "tipping." Simply put, their argument is that a color-blind admissions policy, no matter how strict on other counts, would necessarily create not just a new "segregation" through white flight but also a new "ghettoization," which would nullify black gains of additional housing units. Morley writes:

> The proof was right down the street in Linden Plaza, a middle-income project that opened in 1975. Linden Plaza started out more than half black, well over the generally accepted 30 percent "tipping point." It pledged to stay integrated; nevertheless, within four years it became 95 percent black. Even though Linden Plaza, after tipping, had a higher average household income than Starrett City, it was engulfed in crime, vandalism, and management neglect, while Starrett remained relatively safe and clean. . . .
>
> The uniformity and sickening speed which characterized the tipping phenomena could not be solely explained by white racism. Rather, it was undeniable that the social disorganization afflicting large black populations—unsupervised youth, discouraged workers, and above all, a higher crime rate—simply became intolerable at some point to their white neighbors. White fears might originate in racism . . . but they were also fed by the reality of muggings. . . .
>
> Starrett had an answer: it would make sure too many whites didn't leave by making sure too many blacks didn't get in. . . . In defense of integration, Starrett's weapon of last resort was preferential treatment of whites.

MORLEY ALSO CLAIMS that middle-class black neighborhoods show higher crime rates than their white counterparts, taking his evidence from Linden Plaza (which is not "down the street" from Starrett in any ordinary sense, but rather on the other side of the no-man's-land of shopping centers, major highways, and open marshland that isolates Starrett City from the ghetto territory of Brownsville-East New York, where Linden Plaza is situated). Linden Plaza, in short, was engulfed by an impoverished black ghetto where unemployment is rampant and from which most of Linden Plaza's crime came. Management neglect, in the form of inadequate security and demoralizingly slow repairs, was undoubtedly real, but one reason, in Linden Plaza's case, was a racist equation of "tipping" inside the project with crime coming largely from outside.

Management attitudes are critical. A larger development that Morley might have cited, the 2,500-unit Vanderveer Estates in Brooklyn's Flatbush section, had similar problems after it "tipped" and became virtually all-black in the mid-'70s. Not only did management diminish security and repairs; it abandoned tenant screening as well, admitting large, single-parent welfare families without investigating their housing histories or ability to pay the rent.

But Vanderveer tenants rallied, winning the right to screen new applicants, a policy that has had a marked effect in just a few years' time. They worked with such local politicians as Assemblywoman Rhoda Jacobs, who found that while management supplied Vanderveer with two security guards, it had six at its Dunbar Apartments in Manhattan, a development one-fifth Vanderveer's size.

That management commitment and tenant organization can be decisive is evident in the safety

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and cleanliness of such middle- and working-class black communities as Harlem's Esplanade Gardens and River Bend, both built under subsidy programs similar to Starrett's. There simply is no reason to believe that Starrett City, with its tradition of tenant vigilance, a capable management, and distance from the ghetto turf, would meet the fate of Linden Plaza.

THE SUCCESS OF SO MANY black working- and middle-class developments points up the critical issue that Starrett's defenders ignore: *the unconscionable stigma involved and perpetuated in the exclusion of blacks*. Morley challenges former NAACP attorney James Meyerson's contention that occupancy controls are "stigmatizing and exclusionary," designed to keep blacks out, while traditional affirmative action employs "inclusionary quotas," designed to bring in the previously excluded. For Morley,

> This is a distinction without a difference: Traditional affirmative action is also "exclusionary," at least for those whites [Brian Weber, Allen Bakke] who would not be hired or admitted to law school because of it. And occupancy controls at Starrett City can be viewed as "inclusionary"—for whites and, notably, for blacks who would otherwise not get to live in an integrated community.

That last point puts me in mind of the old "Jewish quota" of 12 percent at Yale University during the 1930s. Its purpose, of course, was not to remedy a dearth of Jewish representation but to restrain what, on scholastic merit alone, might otherwise have been a surfeit. Did it mean that Yale admissions officers despised Jews? Heavens, no! some of them would have insisted. The point was to *include* a reasonable number of them in the felicities of gentlemanly life.

Bright Jewish boys of the time were bound to run afoul of those gentlemanly felicities; one can't help imagining that, in the fantasies of Yale admissions officers, too many Jews would simply have engulfed and destroyed Yale's traditional way of life. And those who believed—on "evidence" no more or less substantial than Morley's about middle-class blacks—that Jews tended to be pushy certainly feared for the code of gentlemanly honor.

I don't mean to stretch this analogy unbearably. Yale is a private (even if also "national") institution, unlike publicly subsidized housing; and it may not have been necessarily wrong for "old Blues" to fear the changes a rapid influx of Jews (and ethnic Catholics) would have brought. Ancient understandings would undoubtedly have ceased to govern the university's community life, and many of the old families would have sent their sons elsewhere rather than subject them to the code's dissolution, no matter how insipid or perverse a later generation might find it. The same would be true, I suspect, for Starrett's whites (many of them Jews, ironically) under a color-blind admissions policy, using even the strictest of nonracial guidelines. The abrasions of cultural change, the fear of being rendered a minority on what had been one's own turf, would precipitate white flight even without crime.

True, Yale's WASPs had resources to go elsewhere; most of Starrett City's whites do not, certainly not in the New York City rental market. Those who would leave would be forced to take a bite out of scarcity, and few, I think, would argue that they should suffer for blacks to advance. That two such groups must fight over scarce housing is an indictment of society's leaders and investment priorities.

But consider what color-blind admissions would mean. Whites on Starrett's waiting list would lose only preferential treatment, not equal treatment; blacks would be gaining equal, not preferential, treatment. Surely, no stigma would result for whites under such circumstances.

This is why there is something mystifying about Morley's argument that blacks excluded from Starrett are no more unfairly treated than Allen Bakke or Brian Weber. These men's frustrations were real, precisely because they were acknowledged to be as well qualified as blacks admitted or hired preferentially instead of them. Certainly, no one argued that these two would bring deterioration with them, and therefore no stigma attached to their exclusion. Rather, they were being asked to cope with scarcities that blacks had hitherto borne disproportionately.

That was jolting, but fair. A color-blind rather

Oh, Sweet Mystery of Life . . .

In Brownsville [while campaigning in Texas], the somewhat impoverished southernmost city in the state, with 14.6 percent unemployment, Mr. Reagan told a largely Hispanic group of college students, "Even though economic matters are important, well, the old, old saying is true: Man does not live by bread alone.

"We really almost diminish all the things we are when we limit the debate to money and how it is distributed in our country," said Mr. Reagan. "We lose a sense of the mystery in men's souls and the mystery of life."

New York Times, Oct. 3, 1984

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than preferential admissions policy at Starrett would be fairer still. No whites living there would be asked to leave; no whites on the waiting list would be denied on the basis of color.

A WEEK AFTER MORLEY'S ARTICLE was published, black families on Starrett's waiting list jammed the federal courthouse in Brooklyn to learn how little the terms of the settlement offered them. At the judge's invitation, plain-spoken tales of pain and puzzlement poured forth. They had saved, they had waited; they could not understand why, money and credentials in hand, they had been treated so shabbily in their search for a decent home.

New York housing activist Bill Price writes:

> The real nature of the "tipping point" is that it institutionalizes white fears and defines a percentage level to white tolerance. In this sense, we are building racism into our community by administrative decree. As in many forms of racism, this process identifies the oppressed as the oppressor and thereby creates a rationalization through which whites can maintain power without feeling guilty about it. The causes of "tipping" are not black. The causes are white anxieties, white attitudes. But the cure is to control blacks.

If blacks are ever to be truly integrated into society so that whites no longer need fear them, then their access to decent housing and jobs must be considered more important than integration—through discriminatory practices!—at any one site. Equal opportunity is a necessary, even if not sufficient, condition for the dissolution of white fears.

One needn't revert to hoary defenses of "separate but equal" to argue that color-blind but cannily managed opportunity, "integrated" or not, is the only route to stability and decency, for blacks as well as for whites. The early, often "segregated" advances of other ethnic groups in neighborhoods they "took over" is ample testimony to that fact. "Tipping" is disruptive and painful, but its linkage to "inevitable" deterioration is illusive, and unacceptable as a premise for public policy. □

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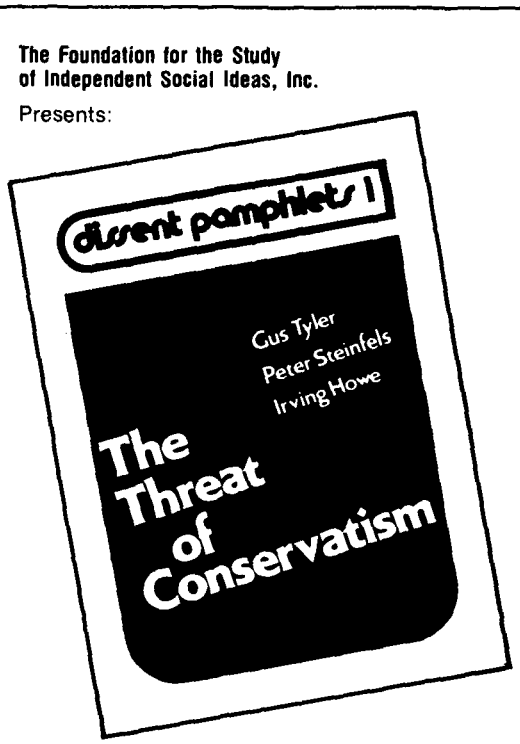

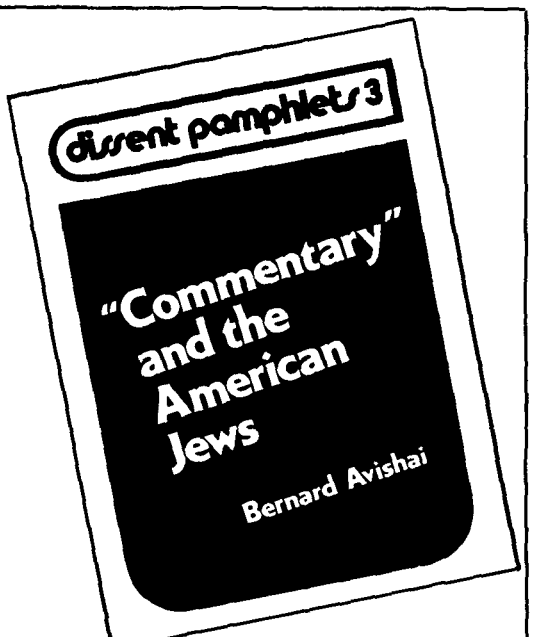

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Julius Lester

You Can't Go Home Again

Critical Thoughts About Jesse Jackson

Julius Lester, a veteran of the civil rights movement, worked with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and was a member of its Central Committee. He is a former columnist for the Guardian *and* Liberation, *and the author of many books on black history and politics, including* Look Out, Whitey! Black Power's Gon' Get Your Mama, Revolutionary Notes, *and* The Seventh Son: The Thought and Writings of W. E. B. Du Bois. *He is now teaching in the Department of Afro-American Studies and the Judaic Studies Program at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.*

For a somewhat different analysis of the Jackson campaign, see the article by Joseph Clark in the Summer 1984 Dissent. — Eds.

It was an exercise in '60s nostalgia. "Our time has come!" he shouted from the pulpits of black churches and the campaign stump. "Our time has come!"

It was a cry reminiscent of the "Freedom Now" chant of the early civil rights movement, one recast and sung by Jim Morrison and the Doors in the late '60s as, "We want the world and we want it now!" Both chants may or may not have been effective mass psychology, but neither had any relation to effective politics. Neither did "Our time has come!"

Jesse Jackson's race for power (disguised as a presidential candidacy) was taken more seriously than it might have been because he was black. (One could call blackness "the inherent intimidation factor.") An unfortunate legacy of the '60s has been an almost total, moral abdication on the part of whites where anything black is concerned. Having been told that they are "racists," that they cannot understand black culture, most whites take refuge (publicly, at least) in patronizing and pitying blacks, accepting, excusing, and rationalizing actions, attitudes, and words they would not accept from nonblacks.

> Jackson is now making history [trumpeted the *New York Times*], not as a black Presidential candidate but as a "serious" black Presidential candidate. That development alone is likely to have far-reaching effects on the American political scene by energizing the black vote and by altering the perceptions among whites of black candidates for elective office. [Quoted in *Playboy*, June 1984.]

Such enthusiastic paternalism made the Jackson candidacy almost unassailable. (The truth is that FDR and JFK "energized" the black vote like no others in American history, and if "the perceptions among whites of black candidates" had not already changed, there would not be so many black mayors.) Paternalism was nowhere more evident than in how well the media allowed Jackson to survive his "Hymie/Hymietown" gaffe and his association with Minister Farrakhan. Mondale and Hart would not have survived making references to "nigger" or "niggertown," or associations with reactionary white extremists, if for no other reason than that blacks would have gone to war! Jackson and the black community, however, were patronized by white liberals and the media, told, in effect, "You do not have to conform to the same ethical stan-

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dards required of everyone else in our society." The consequences of being given an immoral license remain to be seen, but consequences there will be.

But in an age when the "show-biz factor" permeates American life, and presidential candidates are judged as much on that as their programs, Jackson's blackness, sex appeal, and messianic oratory allowed him to walk around in public "with no clothes on" and not even a child pointed it out.

One is not sure if there is more to Jackson than show business and a drive to power. Since the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., he has been running for the position of heir apparent, which he began to achieve with his 1979 trip to Israel and Lebanon. The trip, being photographed embracing Yasir Arafat, his pro-PLO statements and anti-Semitic statements may have made him anathema to Jews, but blacks saw one of their own—handsome, well-dressed, articulate—making pronouncements on foreign policy and meeting with world leaders. Suddenly, he was more than a Chicago-based, charismatic black minister who headed a quasi-political organization. He had become a symbol.

A person who assumes the role of Deliverer becomes the repository for the dreams and aspirations of his group. He articulates the anguish and carries the hopes for salvation. The messianic element enters politics only when a people's despair is so total that they can conceive of no other alternative to hopelessness, and the '70s and '80s have not been good for many blacks. Unemployment of depression proportions, loss of real income, and the Reagan budget cuts were a cruel follow-up to the hopes raised in the '60s. Combining an expressed concern for the poor and the dispossessed with a perceived international standing, Jackson became a symbol that the Promised Land was still possible for those who had almost forgotten it existed.

WHEN JACKSON ANNOUNCED for the presidency, hopes and dreams were unleashed as they had not been since the '60s. That those dreams and hopes were only going to be toyed with was apparent from the moment Jackson said he was going to create a "Rainbow Coalition." (After all, who can hate a rainbow with its pot of gold at the end?) A romantic phrase with overtones of the '60s, it seemed to promise a political Woodstock, the creation of a People's Park, or a perpetual March on Washington. It was also a phrase with cultural associations. Was Jackson telling us that he was the new Wizard of Oz, and was I the only one who kept expecting Judy Garland to appear at a Jackson rally singing, *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*?

"Rainbow Coalition" also had racial overtones, despite Jackson's insistence that it was "not an ethnic march, [but] a political movement to pull together the strength of rejected groups . . . to serve more effectively and be served better by their Government." (*Playboy*, June 1984.)

Jackson's explanation ignored a fundamental lesson of American history: a coalition of "rejected groups" has never brought about social change. Only when "rejected groups" are joined in a coalition by liberals and radicals from established groups has change occurred. The civil rights movement was successful in fighting segregation and acquiring voting rights for blacks (and many others) only as long as that movement was composed of blacks together with liberal and radical whites. When "the movement" went its black separatist way, its political effectiveness came to an abrupt end. The very concept on which Jackson's candidacy was based limited its appeal, insuring Jackson the black vote and nothing else.

From the concept came another point of confusion: Jackson never seemed clear as to who he was. As one member of the Congressional Black Caucus, who did not want to be identified, put it, "The problem with Jesse is that he doesn't know what he wants to be, a politician making compromises or a civil rights leader saying 'I demand justice.' " (*New York Times*, July 20, 1984.) Jackson seemed to want to be Martin Luther King and Adam Clayton Powell, a feat of prestidigitation that would have been unparalleled in American history. (One also began to wonder if he became possessed by Henry Kissinger fantasies, as he brought Lt. Robert Goodman out of Syria, prisoners out of Cuba, and tried to negotiate peace in El Salvador.) He talked alternately in the specifics of politics—the budget, foreign policy, and so on—and in the language of a moral crusade. "The rainbow is a moral cause, not just a political campaign" (*New York Times*, July 1, 1984).

Any claim Jackson may have had to moral leadership was tarnished by his "Hymie/Hymietown" remark, and damaged by his initial denials and belated admission of guilt. He showed himself

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to be, not a moral leader, but a run-of-the-mill politician who, when caught with his foot in his mouth, instinctively denies that it is his foot. But anyone who had followed Jackson's career knew that he was a walking repository of anti-Jewish clichés.

Even when explaining that he was not anti-Semitic, he demonstrated the contrary. Jackson claimed that the term "Hymie" did not have a "negative meaning to it, either politically or religiously. It was an unfortunate use of words, but no different from someone saying he's going up to Harlem to see 'Mose' or 'Mosela.' You know, said with a lighthearted ring." (*Playboy*, June 1984.) How would Jackson (and other blacks) have responded if Gary Hart had announced he was "going up to Harlem to see 'Mose' or 'Mosela' "? And, interestingly, Jackson got on his racial high horse when Bill Moyers referred to him as the "Kingfish of politics," and then had to dismount in embarrassment when Moyers explained that he was referring to the former governor of Louisiana, Huey Long, and not the character on the late *Amos n' Andy* show.

Jackson's claims to a morally superior leadership were destroyed by his association with Minister Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam, who worked as diligently at being anti-Semitic as Julius Streicher. It was an interesting relationship to speculate about, because, from an objective political point of view, Jackson did not need him. Yet Jackson felt that he did. Why? The reason given by Thomas N. Todd, Jackson's successor at Operation PUSH and the man who brought Jackson and Farrakhan together, is that it was an opportunity to put an end to splits in black America between black civil rights leaders and black nationalists. (Reported in the *New York Times*, June 30, 1984.)

Such specious reasoning has plagued black American history for more than a century. This "race philosophy" is based on the premise that blackness is the overriding political principle to create black unity. It is a reactionary nationalism, which appeals to the lowest common denominator.

But throughout his campaign, Jackson changed masks as it seemed to suit him, and became a race leader, moral figure, and politician by turns. The result was that he awoke one morning with Farrakhan around his neck like an albatross. There is no doubt that the moral giants of black history—Douglass, Du Bois, King—would not have been associated with a Farrakhan. Each took the risk in his political career of articulating positions contrary to the prevailing black ethos, and each took it because he placed ethical principles above race.

Once Jackson accepted Farrakhan, he could not repudiate him for fear of losing credibility in the black community. This is not meant to imply that even those blacks to whom Jackson had a visceral appeal were Farrakhan supporters. But the psychology of the race philosophy demands a rallying around the black flag when a prominent black is attacked by whites. (And, sadly, no one ever asks if that black may have done something to merit being attacked.)

In his speech at the Democratic Convention, Jackson tried to reestablish his moral credentials:

> If in my low moments, in word, deed, or attitude, through some error of temper, taste, or tone, I have caused anyone discomfort, created pain or revived someone's fears, that was not my truest self. If there were occasions when my grape turned into a raisin and my joy bell lost its resonance, please forgive me. Charge it to my head and not to my heart.

From the thunderous applause and cheers that greeted these words, one would have thought that Jackson had apologized. But apologies do not begin with a qualifying "if." How could Jackson doubt that he had "caused discomfort, created pain," and "revived fears"? His "apology" had all the earmarks of sincerity without honesty (as someone once observed of James Agee).

Despite the almost universal approval given Jackson's speech, there is no indication that he appreciates the depth of his moral confusion about Judaism and anti-Semitism. In his June 1984 *Playboy* interview, Jackson said, ". . . from a religious standpoint, there is something about Judaism that appeals to me. I'm Judaeo-Christian; my religious roots are there." To a Jew, such a statement smacks of arrogance. Just because Jackson has read what Christians call the Old Testament does not mean he knows anything about Judaism. (But Christians often make the mistake of equating Judaism with their Old Testament.) It smacks of religious anti-Semitism by making Judaism a hyphenated prefix to Christianity. (There is no such religious identity as "Judaeo-Christian.") In that same interview, Jackson goes on to maintain that "historically, the

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best experience of the Jewish people has been in their religious faith, the chastising, courageous strength of the prophets who challenged their own politicians." It is precisely this lecturing of other people about their experience that blacks have angrily objected to when they have been on the receiving end.

JACKSON'S POLITICAL ACUMEN could be considered as questionable as his morality. While political radicals and some liberals may have found solace in his positions on Central America, the defense budget, and gay rights, for example, his radicalism put him to the left of the black electorate and the Democratic party. This might be looked upon as commendable, except that Jackson was seeking, also, to become a power within the party at a time when it was adorning itself with the red, white, and blue. Jackson's trips to Nicaragua and Cuba and his statements of seeming approval of their governments did not endear him to the Democratic party leadership nor lead them to regard him as a political peer to be invited into the party's inner circle, which is what Jackson wanted.

The measure of politicians is, ultimately, their effectiveness in meeting the needs of a constituency. Jackson could never seem to decide whether his campaign was a serious political effort on behalf of blacks and the economically dispossessed, or whether it was only symbolic, an ego-assuaging moment in the sun (and the klieg lights). But blacks have had enough of symbolism, and the economic consequences of Reaganism required more than the psychological bromide of a well-dressed, good-looking black man on the campaign stump.

Jackson's lack of political acumen manifested itself also in his veiled threats to bolt the Democratic party and take his constituency with him. Throughout the campaign he contended that blacks could do without the Democratic party, but the Democrats could not do without blacks. This is only a half-truth, because blacks do not have an alternative to the Democratic party, except not voting. Jackson rattled sabres, but did not have a cavalry to make a charge.

It was precisely this lack of alternatives that underlined the political weakness of Jackson's candidacy. He wanted to become a power broker within the Democratic party, while at the same time maintaining a stance of aggrieved outsider and titular head of black America. Spiderman could not have walked such a tightrope.

The only viable option Jackson had was the one he did not consider, and that was to combine his appeals to black pride and unity with an old-fashioned appeal for integration. Knowing that he had no chance of winning the nomination, Jackson could have selected a white woman for a running mate and campaigned throughout the primaries to bring blacks and liberal whites together as they have not been since 1964. Jackson was unable to do this because the "Rainbow Coalition," with its overtones of "black and white together," was a facade behind which Jackson sought to make himself president of only Black America.

He may succeed on the symbolic level but, in a curious way, his candidacy was out of step with both the black mood and the national mood. A *Newsweek* poll (May 7, 1984) found that 51 percent of registered black Democrats wanted Mondale as the party's nominee as opposed to 38 percent for Jackson. Even more interesting was that when asked who their second choice was 29 percent said Jackson, 28 percent Mondale, and 22 percent Hart. The same poll revealed that only 11 percent felt that Jackson represented blacks better than anybody else, and 82 percent saw him merely as one of a number of important black leaders.

The apparent "softness" of the black Jackson votes was underlined when a *New York Times/CBS News* poll (July 10, 1984) revealed little difference in black and white attitudes on defense spending, with 55 percent of blacks wanting military spending increased or kept the same. One of Jackson's big issues was significant reduction in defense spending. Another major Jackson issue was the abolition of runoff primaries in the South. Yet the same *Time/CBS News* poll revealed that only 15 percent of Jackson's avowed supporters agreed, and only 13 percent of black non-Jackson and non-Mondale supporters agreed.

Not only was Jackson not representative of blacks on two of his major issues, the thrust of his campaign was in defiance of what has been quietly happening for the past 15 years. He ignored the fact that blacks have been getting elected to major offices in cities where white support was necessary, and they have been doing so without the fairy-tale imagery of rainbows. Coleman Young in Detroit,

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Wilson Goode in Philadelphia, Tom Bradley in Los Angeles, Harold Washington in Chicago, and Thurman Milner in Hartford could not have been elected with only black votes. And Bradley came within 1 percent of being elected governor of California, a feat clearly needing white votes.

Jackson's plaint throughout his campaign that whites were not as liberal as blacks, that blacks would vote for whites but not vice-versa, is simply not true. His comment was an insult to the black politicians who have presented themselves to the voters of their communities on their merit as politicians and administrators, and not as symbols for a cause.

The established black leadership recognized this clearly. Andrew Young commented that while there was "tremendous emotional and psychological significance to Jackson's candidacy, there hasn't been a great deal of political significance. . . . To be a real national leader, Jesse's got to find a way to lead white folks." NAACP head Benjamin Hooks observed that it was a "slur on the whole black community" to imply that blacks have not shown enthusiasm for voting before Jackson's candidacy:

> We utilize the vote as a precious instrument and all this talk as if this is the first time it's happened is so absurd you can hardly deal with it. . . . but for the black vote, [New York Mayor] Koch would have been elected governor. Harold Washington, Congressman Harold Ford of Memphis, Wilson Goode —they've gotten larger black percentages than Jesse's candidacy.

And John Jacob of the Urban League was forthright: "There are black people with better credentials for the job of president." (Quotes from *Newsweek*, May 7, 1984.)

Jackson's attempt to meld a moral appeal with politics failed, and it was, perhaps, doomed to do so. The civil rights movement did for a time successfully fuse morality and politics, but now the hard question is: are the days over when blacks can make moral claims on the white conscience? The evidence would suggest that such claims have not only lost their effectiveness, they have acquired an air of black self-pity.

Jackson failed to recognize that the 1980s are a time when appeals to conscience are unnecessary and self-defeating. For the first time since the Depression, more and more blacks and whites are riding in the same boat of economic despair and anxiety about the future. If Mondale and Hart made the mistake of appealing primarily to the white middle class, Jackson's mistake was ignoring that same middle class.

Jackson is a product of the '60s, and the style of his candidacy was covered with the dust of civil rights marches on southern back roads. However, the substance that made the civil rights movement successful was lacking—a wedding of tactics to meet the problem, an involvement of blacks and whites in an action to create change, an idealism that sought, not utopia, but respect for the integrity of all human beings. The civil rights movement awakened hope and gave it purpose and focus, and Americans, black and white, were freed from one cell, at least, in the prison of racism.

With one hand Jackson seemed to offer a renewal of the black-Jewish-liberal coalition of the civil rights movement through his Rainbow Coalition. With the other he seemed concerned only with creating a black constituency. While in the '60s there were problems faced only by blacks, there are now few if any *exclusively* black problems to be addressed by special programs or legislation. There is something dubious about Jackson pressuring Mondale to commit himself to a jobs program for blacks when white Americans also face an economically uncertain future. Ultimately, there is something immoral about a campaign slogan that says, "Our time has come!" because an "our" automatically creates a "their" whose time must end. One unhappy result might have been for the ordinary white American to assume that he or she was the "their" and to buy a Reagan button. For blacks, "Our time has come" was a cruel raising of hopes to a people for whom hope is the last lifeline.

THERE IS PERHAPS nothing in nature more ephemeral than a rainbow; however, its very appeal comes from its evanescent and almost illusory nature. Our love of rainbows comes not only from their illusion of substance but from how rarely they are seen, not to mention how quickly they pass.

It is doubtful, however, that Jesse Jackson's political career will be as short-lived as a rainbow. Nor will it fill our spirits with a sense of wonder and awe, causing us to feel, if only for an instant, that we can be more than we are. □

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Gary T. Marx

I'll Be Watching You

Reflections on the New Surveillance

Popular culture is sometimes far ahead of academic analysis in identifying important social currents. This is true of the hit song *Every Breath You Take*, sung by a celebrated rock group known as The Police. It contains these lines:

every breath you take	[breath analyzer]
every move you make	[motion detector]
every bond you break	[polygraph]
every step you take	[electronic anklet]
every single day	[continuous monitoring]
every word you say	[bugs, wiretaps, mikes]
every night you stay . . .	[light amplifier]
every vow you break . . .	[voice stress analysis]
every smile you fake	[brain wave analysis]
every claim you stake . . .	[computer matching]
I'll be watching you	[video surveillance].

From this song we can draw hints of what can be called "the new surveillance." The surveillance component of social control is changing radically. The rationalization of crime control, which began in the 19th century, has crossed a critical threshold as a result of broad changes in technology and social organization. Surveillance has become penetrating and intrusive in ways that previously were imagined only in fiction.

The information-gathering powers of the state and private organizations are extending ever deeper into the social fabric. The ethos of social control has expanded from focused and direct coercion used after the fact and against a particular target to anticipatory actions entailing deception, manipulation, planning, and a diffuse panoptic vision.

I shall attempt here to (1) describe some of the major types of this new surveillance; (2) indicate how contemporary forms differ from traditional ones; (3) consider some undesirable consequences of these changes.

The gigantic data banks made possible by computers raise important surveillance questions. Many basic facts about the computerization of credit, banking, medical, educational, employment, tax, welfare, telephone, and criminal-justice records are well known. But beyond the increased amount of information they make available, computers have altered the very nature of surveillance. Record surveillance is routinized, broadened and deepened, and, for practical purposes, records become eternal. Bits of scattered information that in the past did not threaten the individual's privacy and anonymity are now joined. Organizational memories are extended over time and across space. Observations have a more textured, dimensional quality. Rather than focusing on the discrete individual at one point in time and on static demographic data such as date of birth, surveillance increasingly involves more complex transactional analysis, interrelating persons and events (for instance, the timing of phone calls, travel, bank deposits).[1]

A thriving new computer-based, data-scavenging industry now sells information gleaned from such sources as drivers' licenses, vehicle- and voter-registration lists, birth, marriage, and death certificates, land deeds, telephone and organizational directories, and census-tract records.

Many issues—such as privacy, civil liberties, uses of and control over information, unauthorized access, errors, and the rights of the person about whom information is gathered—are raised by the computer-matching and -profiling operations that have come into increased prominence in the last decade.[2]

Matching involves the comparison of information from two or more distinct data sources. In the United States, more than 500

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computer-matching programs are routinely carried out by government at state and federal levels, and the matching done by private interests is far more extensive. Profiling involves an indirect and inductive logic. Often, clues are sought that will increase the probability of discovering violations. A number of distinct data items are correlated in order to assess how close an event or person comes to a predetermined model of known violations or violators. Consider the following examples:

- A Massachusetts nursing-home resident lost her eligibility for government medical assistance because of a match of bank and welfare records. The computer match discovered that she had more than the minimum amount welfare recipients are permitted in a savings account. What the computer did not know was that the money was held in trust for a local funeral director, to be used for her burial expenses. Regulations exempt burial contracts from asset calculations.
- The Educational Testing Service uses profiling to help discover cheating. In 1982 it sent out about 2,000 form letters alleging "copying" to takers of its scholastic aptitude test based partly on computer analysis. A statistical review had "found close agreement of your answers with those on another answer sheet from the same test center. Such agreement is unusual and suggests that copying occurred." Students were told that in two weeks their scores would be canceled and colleges notified, unless they provided "additional information" to prove they had not cheated.
- In New York City, because of computer matching, persons cannot purchase a marriage license or register a deed for a new home if they have outstanding parking tickets.

I

Some of fiction's imaginary surveillance technology, like the two-way television that George Orwell described, is now reality. According to some observers, video-telephone communication is likely to be widespread in private homes by the year 2000. One-way video surveillance has expanded rapidly, as anyone who ventures into a shopping mall or uses an electronic bank teller should realize. The interior of many stores is monitored by closed-circuit TV. The camera is often inside a ceiling globe with complete 360-degree movement and the ability to tape-record. Amber or mirrored surfaces hide where the cameras are aimed.

Among the new techniques that permit intrusions that only recently were in the realm of science fiction, or not even envisioned there, are new or improved lasers, parabolic mikes and other bugs with still more powerful transmitters, subminiature tape recorders, remote-camera and videotape systems; means of seeing in the dark, detecting heat or motion; odor, pressure, and contraband sensors; tracking devices and voice stress analyzers.

The last decade has seen the increased use of supposedly scientific "inference" or "personal truth technology" based on body clues (such as the polygraph, voice stress analysis, the stomach pump, the "passive alcohol detector," and blood or urine analysis for drugs). These highly diverse forms of detection have at least one thing in common—they seek to verify an implicit or explicit claim put forth by an individual regarding identity, attitudes, and behavior.

"Mini-Awacs" and satellites that can spot a car or a person from 30,000 feet up have been used for surveillance of drug traffickers. The CIA has apparently used satellite photographs for "domestic coverage" to determine the size and activities of antiwar demonstrations and civil disorders. The "starlight scope" light amplifier, developed for the Vietnam War, can be used with a variety of cameras and binoculars. When it amplifies light 85,000 times it turns night settings into daylight. Unlike the infrared devices developed earlier, it does not give off a tell-tale glow.

The highly secretive National Security Agency—using 2,000 staffed interception posts throughout the world, and satellites, aircraft, and ships—monitors all electronic communication from and to the United States. Its computer system permits simultaneous monitoring of about 54,000 telephone calls and cables. The agency is beyond the usual judicial and legislative controls and can disseminate its information to other government agencies without a warrant.[3]

The 1968 wiretap law makes it a felony for a third party to place an electronic listening

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device on a telephone or in a room. Government agents can do this only under strictly defined conditions with a warrant. Yet this law refers only to aurally transmitted "conversations." It says nothing about nonvoice and video communications. No restrictions are placed on the interception of information transmitted in digital microwave form. As a result of recent technical developments, more than half of all long-distance telephone calls are now transmitted from point to point in digital form and then converted back to a familiar voice sound. Telephone voice communications will increasingly be sent this way. Much computer information is also sent via microwaves. Even if laws were to be passed granting this information the same protection as voice conversations, the information can easily be picked up without leaving a trace by anyone with even modest snooping equipment.

Another surveillance use of the telephone involves the expansion of hot lines for anonymous reporting. One of the largest programs is TIP (Turn-in-a-Pusher). The video equivalent of the old reward posters, a program found in hundreds of communities, is called Crime Stoppers USA, Inc. It uses televised reenactments ("The Crime of the Week") to encourage witnesses to unsolved crimes to come forward. There are also radio and newspaper versions. Many companies maintain an internal hot line for anonymous reporting. WeTiP, Inc., a nonprofit organization, offers a general, nationwide 24-hour toll-free hot line for reporting suspicious activities. All 19 federal inspector-generals and some state and local agencies have hot lines for receiving allegations.

THE REAL ACTION, in the future, will be with nonhuman informers: a 400-pound, bulletproof mobile robot "guard" has been developed. It is equipped with a sonar range finder, sonic and infrared sensors, and an odor detector for locating humans. The robot can find its way through a strange building. Should it encounter an intruder, it can say in a stern, synthesized voice, "You have been detected." Another "mobile robotic sentry," resembling a miniature tank, patrols an area and identifies intruders. Users can choose the robot's weaponry and whether or not human permission (from a remote monitoring station) is needed before it opens fire. But not to worry. The manufacturer assures us that in the U.S. the device will not be "armed with lethal weapons"; or if it is, "there will always be a human requirement in the loop."

Telemetric devices attached to a subject use radio waves to transmit information on the location and/or physiological condition of the wearer and permit continuous remote measurement and control. Such devices, along with new organizational forms based on theories of diversion and deinstitutionalization (such as halfway houses and community treatment centers), diffuse the surveillance of the prison into the community.

After over a decade of discussion, telemetric devices are now being tried in the criminal-justice system. Offenders in at least four experimental jurisdictions are serving court-supervised sentences that stipulate wearing a monitoring anklet containing an electronic transmitter. The radio signal it emits is picked up by a receiver connected to the telephone in the wearer's home. This receiver relays the signal to a central computer. If the wearer goes beyond 150 feet from this telephone or tries to remove or unplug the device, the interruption of the signal is displayed on the computer. The judge receives a daily copy of the printout, and any errant behavior must be explained.

In other proposed systems subjects are not restricted to their residence; however, their whereabouts are continuously known. The radio signal is fed into a modified missile-tracking device that graphs the wearer's location and can display it on a screen. In some police departments, an automatic car-locator system has been tried to help supervisors know exactly where patrol cars are at all times. There also are various hidden beepers that can be attached to vehicles and other objects to trace their movements.

The Hong Kong government is testing an electronic system for monitoring where, when, and how fast a car is driven. A small radio receiver in the car picks up low-frequency signals from wire loops set into streets and then transmits back the car's identification number. The system was presented as an efficient means for applying a road tax to the many cars

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in Hong Kong's concentrated traffic areas. It can, of course, also be used to enforce speed limits and for surveillance. In the U.S., a parking meter has recently been patented that registers inserted coins and then radios police when the time has run out.

Surveillance of workers, whether on assembly lines or in offices or stores, has become much more severe with computerized electronic measures. Factory outputs and mistakes can be more easily counted and work pace, to a degree, controlled. Employee theft of expensive components or tools may be deterred by embedded sensors that emit a signal when taken through a barrier. Much has been written about the electronic office, where the data-processing machine serves both as a work tool and monitoring device. Productivity and employee behavior thus are carefully watched, and even executives are not exempt. In some major American corporations communication flows (memo circulation, use of internal phone systems) now are closely tracked.

In some offices, workers have to inform the computer when they are going to the bathroom and when they return. Employees may be required to carry an ID card with a magnetic stripe and check in and out as they go to various "stations."

Integrated "management systems" offer visual, audio, and digital information about the behavior of employees and customers. Information may be recorded from cash-register entries, voices, motion, or when standing on a mat with a sensor. Audiovisual recordings and alarms may be programmed to respond to a large number of "triggering devices."

Means of personal identification have gone far beyond the rather easily faked signature or photo ID. Thus one new employee security-checking procedure involves retinal eye patterns. Before gaining access, or a benefit, a person's eyes are photographed through a set of binoculars, and an enlarged print of the retina pattern is compared to a previous print on file. Retinal patterns are said to be more individual than thumbprints, offering greater certainty of identification.

FINALLY, UNDERCOVER PRACTICES—those old, traditional means of surveillance and investigation—have drastically changed in form and expanded in scale during the last decade. The new devices and techniques have enabled police and federal agencies to penetrate criminal, and sometimes noncriminal, milieus in utterly new ways.[4]

In the United States, the federal agency that is most affected is the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In the past, the FBI viewed undercover operations as too risky and costly (for both individuals and the agency's reputation) for use in routine investigations of conventional criminal activity. Now, however, in the words of an agent, "Undercover operations have become the cutting edge of the FBI's efforts to ferret out concealed criminal activity." In the mid-1970s the FBI began using undercover agents in criminal investigations. The number of such investigations has steadily increased from 53 in 1977, to 239 in 1979, to 463 in 1981.

Beyond well-known cases—such as Abscam, the fake consulting firm run jointly by IBM and the FBI that sold "stolen" data to Japanese companies, the John DeLorean case, police posing as derelicts with exposed wallets or as fences purchasing stolen property—recent cases have involved policewomen posing as prostitutes and then arresting the men who propositioned them; tax agents stationed in banks and businesses posing as prospective buyers or clients to gain information; phony cases entered into the criminal-justice system to test if prosecutors and judges would accept bribes; "bait sales" in which undercover agents offer to sell, at a very low price, allegedly stolen goods to merchants or persons they meet in bars; agents acting as guides for big game hunters and then arresting them for killing protected species or animals out of season. These examples—and we could add many more—surely make clear that it is a new ball game, and that its players are sometimes beyond meaningful restraint.

II

Although the causes, nature, and consequences of the various new surveillance methods I have described differ from each other, they do share, to varying degrees, nine characteristics that distinguish them from traditional ones.

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The New Surveillance:

(1) *It transcends distance, darkness, and physical barriers.* As many observers have noted, the historic barriers to the old, Leviathan state lay in the sheer physical impossibility of extending the rulers' ideas and surveillance to the outer regions of vast empires; through closed doors; and into the inner intellectual, emotional, and physical regions of the individual. Technology, however, has gradually made these intrusions easier. Technical impossibility and, to some extent, inefficiency have lost their roles as unplanned protectors of liberty. Sound and video can be transmitted over vast distances, infrared and light-amplifying technologies pierce the dark, intrusive technologies can "see" through doors, suitcases, fog. Truth-seeking technologies claim to be capable of going beneath surface reality to deeper, subterranean truths.

(2) *It transcends time;* its records can easily be stored, retrieved, combined, analyzed, and communicated. Surveillance information can be "socially freeze-dried."[5] When stored, it is available for instant analysis many years after the fact and in totally different interpretive contexts. Computer records, video and audio tapes and discs, photos, and various "signatures"—like workers or parts used in mass production—have become increasingly standardized and interchangeable. Information can be converted into a form that makes it portable, easily reproducible, and transferable across vast distances. Thus data sharing, on an immense scale, becomes possible.

(3) *It is capital- rather than labor-intensive.* It has become much less expensive per unit watched, because technical developments have dramatically altered the economics of surveillance. Information is easily sent back to a central source. A few persons can monitor a great many things (in contrast to traditional forms, such as the gumshoe tailing a suspect at a discreet distance for many days or manually searching records). The monitor need not literally be attending at the instant of transmission to be able to use it. Economy is further enhanced because persons have become voluntary and involuntary consumers of much of this surveillance—and are participating in their own monitoring. Many of the points that follow relate to these economic changes that facilitate expanded surveillance.

(4) *It triggers a shift from targeting a specific suspect—to categorical suspicion.* In the technical implementation of Kafka's nightmare, modern society suspects everyone. The camera, the tape recorder, the identity card, the metal detector, the obligatory tax form that must be filled out even if one has no income, and, of course, the computer make all who come within their province reasonable targets for surveillance. The new, softer forms of control are helping to create a society in which people are permanently under suspicion and surveillance. Everyone is assumed to be guilty until proven innocent. As Michel Foucault observed, what is central here is not physical coercion—but never-ending "judgments, examinations, and observation."

(5) *One of its major concerns is the prevention of violations.* Thus control is extended to ever more features of society and its surroundings. Rather than simply reacting to what is served up around us, anticipatory strategies seek to reduce risk and uncertainty. Publicity about omnipresent and omnipowerful surveillance is to deter violations. And "target hardening" (for instance, better locks) is to make committing violations more difficult. Where violations cannot be prevented, the surroundings may be so structured that violators are either caught in the act or leave strong evidence of their identity and guilt.

(6) *It is decentralized—and triggers self-policing.* In contrast to the trend of the last century, information can now in principle flow as freely from the center to society's periphery as the reverse. Surveillance is decentralized in the sense that national data resources are available to widely dispersed local officials. (The power of national elites, in turn, may also increase as they obtain instant information on those in the farthest reaches of the network.)

Those watched become (willingly and knowingly or not) active participants in their own monitoring, which is often self-activated and automatic. One aspect of this process is that

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persons are motivated to report themselves to government agencies and large organizations and corporations in return for some benefit or to avoid a penalty; another is the direct triggering of surveillance systems by its subjects when, for instance, a person walks, talks on the telephone, turns on a TV set, checks a book out from the library, enters or leaves a controlled area.

(7) *It either has low visibility or is invisible.* Thus it becomes ever more difficult to ascertain when and whether or not we are being watched and who is doing the watching. There is a distancing (both socially and geographically) between watchers and watched, and surveillance is increasingly depersonalized. Its instruments are often difficult to discover, either because they are something other than they appear to be or, as with snooping into microwave transmissions, there often are few indications of surveillance. (Contrast this with traditional wire-tapping, which changes electrical currents, or hidden voice analysis with the traditional polygraph, which requires the subject's cooperation.)

(8) *It is ever more intensive—probing beneath surfaces, discovering previously inaccessible information.* Like drilling technology boring ever deeper into the earth, today's surveillance can prod ever deeper into physical, social, and personal areas. It hears whispers, penetrates clouds, walls, and windows. It "sees" into the body—and attempts to "see" into the soul, claiming to go beneath ostensible meanings and appearances to real meanings.

(9) *It grows ever more extensive—covering not only deeper, but larger areas.* Previously unconnected surveillance threads now are woven into gigantic tapestries of information. Or, in Stan Cohen's imagery, the mesh of the fishing net has not only become finer and more pliable, the net itself now is wider.[6] Broad new categories of persons and behavior have become subjects for information collection and analysis, and as the pool of persons watched expands, so does the pool of watchers. Not only might anyone be watched; everyone is also a potential watcher. And the creation of uncertainty about whether or not surveillance is present is an important strategic element. Mass surveillance has become a reality. The increased number of watchers (whether human or electronic) and self-monitoring devices have recreated, in today's metropolis, some of the dense controls characteristic of the small, closely watched village.

The awesome power of the new surveillance lies in the paradoxical, never before possible combination of decentralized and centralized forms. We are also witnessing an expansion and joining of intensive forms of monitoring traditionally used only in the investigation and surveillance of criminal and espionage suspects, or prisoners, with the more shallow forms of categorical monitoring directed at broad populations.

III

The new surveillance has been generally welcomed by those in business, government, and law enforcement. It does have many attractive features. Stirring examples of its effectiveness are readily available. For example, the life of an elderly heart-attack victim who lived alone was saved when her failure to open the refrigerator sent an alarm through her telephone to a centralized monitor; a corrupt judge was caught when he took a bribe from a police agent pretending to be a criminal; serious crimes have been solved as a result of tips received on hot lines. Consider also the ease of obtaining consumer goods with a credit card; the saving of taxpayers' dollars because of computer-matching programs; citizens' increased feeling of safety when video surveillance is installed. Indeed, Americans seem increasingly willing, even eager, to live with intrusive technologies because of the benefits they expect to result.

Problems concerning errors, data tampering and misuse can be lessened by government legislation and policies, good program design and sensitive and intelligent management. Furthermore, in a free-market economy, some surveillance can be neutralized (by, for instance, the proliferation of antiradar, debugging, and encryption devices).

My point is not to advance some romantic neo-Luddite world view, or to deny the complexity of the moral judgments and trade-offs

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involved. Yet in our eagerness to innovate and our infatuation with technical progress and the gimmickry of surveillance, it is easy to miss the time bombs that may be embedded therein. The negative aspects of these new trends have not received sufficient attention.

There is nowhere to run or to hide. A citizen's ability to evade this surveillance is diminishing. There is no escape from the prying eyes and ears and whirring data-processing machines of government and business. To participate in the consumer society and the welfare state, we must provide personal information. To venture into a shopping mall, bank, subway, sometimes even a bathroom, is to perform before an unknown audience. To apply for a job may mean having to face lie-detector questioning about intimate details of one's life. Requests for parts of one's personal biography (for birth, marriage, and death certificates, driver's licenses, vehicle and voter registration, information for phone, occupational, educational, and special-interest directories) are invitations to comply with more finely tuned manipulative efforts by a new breed of government and marketing researchers, who combine the enormous quantities of available data with the advantages of computerization.

The new surveillance goes beyond merely invading privacy, as this term has been understood; it makes many of the constraints that made privacy possible irrelevant. Traditionally, privacy depended on certain technically or socially inviolate physical, spatial, or temporal barriers—varying from distance to darkness to doors, to the right to remain silent. To invade privacy required crossing an intact barrier. With much of the new technology, however, many of these simply cease to be barriers. As we discussed, information becomes accessible without the need to resort to traditional coercive forms of intrusion. There is no longer the need to enter a room surreptitiously to plant a bugging device, when a microphone aimed at a window a hundred yards away can accomplish the same end; when microwave phone and computer transmissions can simply be plucked from the air without bothering with direct wire-tapping. Without being opened, mail can be read, purses and briefcases viewed through X-rays or sniffed. Alcohol intake can be assessed without a suspect's consent, and voice stress analysis administered without the subject's awareness.

What of Privacy & Autonomy?

IN THE FACE OF THESE CHANGES, we must rethink the nature of privacy and create new supports for it. Some of these, ironically, will rely in part on products of the system's technologies (such as coded or scrambled communications, antiradar and debugging devices).

The most desirable support of our individual privacy and autonomy surely is public awareness. At this point, less than one state in five has laws requiring binding standards for the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of personal information.

Yet more is at stake than privacy. Some of the positive anonymity involving the right to be left alone and unnoticed, so characteristic of modern society, is diminished. The easy computer-bank combining and mining of vast publicly available data to yield precise lists (whether of suspects or targets for sales pitches and solicitations) generate a sense of vulnerability that is very different from the feeling experienced on receipt of junk mail addressed to "occupant." Aside from the annoyance factor, the somewhat "personalized" yet standardized word-processed solicitations can leave one asking "How do they know this about me? How did they find this out? What else do they know? Who are they?" One need not be a Franz Kafka character to feel uneasy.

TO MENTION, BRIEFLY, some other, major negative aspects of the new surveillance:

It may violate the spirit of the Fourth Amendment. For it can trigger fishing expeditions and searches where there is no specific evidence of wrongdoing. Thus it might transform the presumption of innocence into one of guilt—shifting the burden of proof from the state to the target of surveillance, the accused. There also is a danger of presumption of guilt by association or statistical artifact. And, because of the technical nature of the surveillance and its distancing aspects, the accused may (at least initially) be unable to face the accuser. The legal basis of some of the new

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surveillance's crime-prevention actions is also questionable.

The system's focus on prevention can entail the risk of sparking violations that would otherwise not occur. And powerful new mechanisms may invite overloading the system. Far more violations may be uncovered and added to the data banks than can be acted upon. This overabundance of violations in turn may lead to the misuse of prosecutorial discretion, the demoralization of control agents and, perhaps, to favoritism and corruption. And, as our examples suggest, the new surveillance has the potential of fostering repression. The system is, invariably, less effective and certain, and more subject to manipulation and error, than advocates admit. (Computer matching, for instance, can be no better than the data it is fed, which may be dated or wrong, and is often blunt and acontextual. Chemical analysis, which can detect drugs in a person's body, cannot determine how they got there—if a person, for instance, smoked marijuana or simply was around others who did—or whether a drug was taken on or off the job.)

While deterring or discovering some offenders, the routinization of surveillance, ironically, may grant an almost guaranteed means for successful violations and theft to those who gain knowledge of the system and take action to neutralize and exploit it. This suggests that, over time, it seems likely that many of these systems will disproportionately net the marginal, amateur, occasional violator rather than the master criminal.

The proliferation of the new techniques may create a lowest-denominator morality, which may even affect those who will actively protect privacy and autonomy, who thus will use—indiscriminately—the very tactics of those who seek to lessen them.[7]

The new surveillance increases the power of large organizations (whether governmental or private) over the individual.

Individual freedom and liberty prosper when detailed information about a person's life, for the most part, is private. The permanence and accessibility of computerized records mean that we are all tailed by electronic tale-bearers. As there is the possibility of locking in erroneous or sabotaged data, this may have the unintended consequence of permanent, unjust stigmatization. Thus persons may never cease paying for earlier, or never committed, misdeeds. The issues here go far beyond criminal records and faulty computer banks. As records of education, work, health, housing, civil suits, and the like become ever more important in administering the society, persons may decline needed services (as for mental health), avoid conflictual or controversial action (filing a grievance against a boss or a landlord), shun taking risks and experimenting for fear of what it will look like on the record. Conformity and uniformity may increase—squashing diversity, innovation, and vitality.

The fragmentation and isolation characteristic of totalitarian societies result not only from the state's banning or absorption of private organizations, but because individuals mistrust each other and organizations: trust, the most sacred and important element of the social bond, is damaged.

To be sure, we are far from such a society, but the direction in which the new surveillance points is clear. Making the means of anonymous denunciation easily available can lead to false and malicious accusations, and efforts to create a "myth of surveillance" may backfire and create a degree of inhibition, fear, and anxiety unbecoming a democratic society. The potential for harm may be so great, should social conditions change, that we must hesitate before creating even apparently justified surveillance systems (such as linkages between all federal and state data banks, or a mandatory national identification system). From this perspective, framing the policy debate around how to reform such systems is misguided. The issue, instead, is, Should the system be there to begin with?[8] Once these new surveillance systems are institutionalized and taken for granted in a democratic society, they can be used for harmful ends. With a more repressive government and a more intolerant public—perhaps upset over severe economic downturns, large waves of immigration, social dislocations, or foreign policy setbacks—these devices could easily be used against those with the "wrong" political beliefs, against racial, ethnic, or religious minorities, and those with life styles that offend the majority.

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Yet should totalitarianism ever come to the United States it would more likely be by accretion than by cataclysmic events. As Sinclair Lewis argued in *It Can't Happen Here*, it would come in traditional American guise, with the gradual erosion of liberties.

Voluntary participation, beneficent rationales, changes in cultural definition and language hide the onerous aspects of the new surveillance. But as Justice Brandeis warned:

> Experience should teach us to be most on our guard when the government's purposes are beneficent. Men born to freedom are naturally alert to repel invasion of their liberty by evil-minded rulers. The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well-meaning, but without understanding.[9]

The first task of a society that would have liberty and privacy is to guard against the misuse of physical coercion by the state and private parties. The second task is to guard against the softer forms of secret and manipulative control. Because these are often subtle, indirect, invisible, diffuse and deceptive and shrouded in benign justifications, this is clearly the more difficult task.

Notes

This article is drawn from a longer paper available from the author prepared for meetings on George Orwell held by the Council of Europe and the American Sociological Association.

[1] David Burnham, *The Rise of the Computer State* (New York: Random House, 1983) offers a useful discussion of this and other salient themes.

[2] See, for example, G. Marx and N. Reichman, "Routinizing the Discovery of Secrets: Computers as Informants," *American Behavioral Scientist*, March 1984.

[3] J. Bramford, *The Puzzle Palace* (New York: Penguin Books, 1983); K. Krajick, "Electronic Surveillance Makes a Comeback," *Police Magazine*, March 1983.

[4] For example, see G. Marx, "Who Really Gets Stung? Some Issues Raised by the New Police Undercover Work," *Crime and Delinquency*, April 1982; see also U.S. Congress, Select Committee to Study Undercover Activities of Components of the Department of Justice, 97th Congress, Second Session, *Final Report, December 1982* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982). U.S. Congress, Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, 98th Congress, Second Session, *Report: FBI Undercover Operations* (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1984).

[5] See, for example, G. Goodwin and L. Humphreys, "Freeze-Dried Stigma: Cybernetics and Social Control," *Humanity and Society*, November 1982.

[6] S. Cohen, "The Punitive City: Notes on the Dispersion of Social Control," *Contemporary Crisis*, 1979, no. 3, pp. 339-63.

[7] A large array of control and countercontrol devices, through mail-order catalogues and ads in major national periodicals, are now available for the mass market. One large company offers a "secret-connection briefcase," which among other things includes a "pocket-sized tape-recorder detector that lets you know if someone is secretly recording your conversation," a "micro-minature hidden bug-detection system, which lets you know if you're being bugged," a "miniature voice stress analyzer, which lets you know when someone is lying," a "built-in scrambler for total telephone privacy," an "incredible 6-hour tape recorder—so small it fits in a cigarette pack." Ready for use—or misuse. . . .

[8] See, for example, the thoughtful discussion in J. Rule, D. McAdam, L. Stearns, and D. Uglow, *The Politics of Privacy* (New York: New American Library, 1980).

[9] *Olmstead vs. U.S.*, 277 U.S. [Supreme Court] 438 (1927). □

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David Bromwich

Literary Radicalism in America

Left-wing literary people talk more these days about criticism than about fiction or poetry or plays. The statement sounds too flat to be true, and it is fair to ask what "left-wing" signifies in the context. I am using it simply and I hope accurately to mean: people who in a better time would be doing political work. The criticism I have in mind is addressed to readers familiar with the current theoretical debates. It uses a political vocabulary ("undermining," "totalizing," "reification," "rupture," "bad faith") yet it has no implications for practical politics. The aim is not to interpret texts but to change them, and there the enterprise stops. Action means action with respect to texts. On occasions when one can sense other interests at work, the effect is very curious. In a polemical exchange, for instance, between a Marxist critic and a poststructuralist, one may know what sort of event is being staged; but, as one listens to the presentations, and compares the eloquence on both sides with its apparent subject, one sees that criticism is not the point at all. They are really arguing about something else—a social question of some kind—though neither knows it yet. Skeptics like to reply that the underground quality of such encounters is a sign of a hopeless cultural moment.

But the debates I mentioned have a more immediate cause. The language now spoken in literary theory is a language of the avant-garde. There is nothing surprising in this: every marginal movement in culture leads a second life in the history of criticism. What has changed is that the avant-garde has taken up residence in the academy. To be more precise, it has come to be identified with literary study in the universities, which once seemed a natural home for the academic view of art. An academy in the older sense existed for the purpose of inculcating received ideas and judgments. Now, with that function suspended, the avant-garde seems to be in force everywhere. It has become universal, and at the same time it has migrated inward. Much of this was foreseen by those who observed the progress of modern painting. The most acute descriptions of our situation were written more than a decade ago, by Harold Rosenberg, from a position sympathetic to the avant-garde but unhappy about the completeness of its acceptance. We have lately begun to get alternative descriptions from critics who speak for the homeless academy.

The *New Criterion* was launched two years ago as a monthly journal of the arts. Its editor, Hilton Kramer, and the regular contributors who set the tone are nonuniversity academicians. They present themselves as lonely and embattled figures. If their style is heavy, that is because their task is heavy. They are trying to invent cultural conservatism in America. In keeping with this aim, they satirize the universities, where the avant-garde is known to have taken cover; and yet, the tone of the attack is itself borrowed from the militant avant-garde, in the days before its triumph and assimilation. It is a pamphleteering manner, sometimes direct, sometimes ironic, always hectoring.

In this, the journal betrays a certain nostalgia. Its very name makes a similar point, for it honors as a precursor T. S. Eliot—founder of the old *Criterion*, but an avant-garde poet and critic before he became a Classicist, Royalist, Anglo-Catholic, and editor. "Tradition," Eliot wrote, "cannot be inherited"—not, that is, passed on like a correct opinion. "What happens," he added, "when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it." To believe this is not to deny the need in every culture for authority and deference. It gives the critic authority, indeed, to create new

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values, and not only to guard the values already in place. But the conservative wants to perform the latter function above all. He is guided in his judgments by a sequence of implicit equations: taste = inherited opinions = rules = norms (= social norms). His idea of culture is that it can be understood, and once understood it can be kept running smoothly by a team of impartial custodians.

Why does this sound strange to an American? Our daily habits of feeling seem to tell against it, and I think one reason is that the principle of self-trust, which we grew up believing, favors those who shake tradition in some way. We are still Emerson's disciples more or less, and he is a possible, though difficult, ally for a radical, as he cannot even begin to be for a conservative. O. W. Firkins wrote about this aspect of Emerson's appeal:

> His hunger was not greedy precisely because it was insatiable. Of two travellers, one, refusing to stop at the half-way house, pushes on to the large town which is his destination: he may stand for the average radical. The other, for whom the large town is itself a half-way house, whose destination is on the verge of the continent, stops contentedly at the first good lodging place: he may stand for Emerson. Both differ sharply from the man who stays at home.

Radicals are so little in evidence now that it is hard to know what an average radical would be. But when they reappear, in large enough numbers to think of travels like this, they will still be meeting Emersonian ideals along the way.

This essay is about the nature of those ideals, and I take it for granted that they are what we have to work with. A revisionist, whether in politics or culture, can no more exclude them than a speaker can exclude the perfect tenses, for they point to habits we still renew unquestioningly. If this is correct, the sort of criticism now emerging from the university avant-garde, as well as from the homeless academy, is in fact irrelevant to the growth of a new literature. These represent merely the latest efforts of exclusion—armed on one side with conventional skepticism, and on the other with conventional faith. Both attitudes retain the purity of assertions at the level of "as if." With no living tradition behind them, and an infinite vista of improvement ahead, they are free to enjoy the scandal of mimic wars. But the consequential debates in our culture have always taken place somewhere else, and the rival parties have agreed that words are acts that change our lives.

II

American literature is mostly the story of an avant-garde that did not stay at home. Many of its heroes come from two periods: in the 19th century, the 20 years leading up to the Civil War; and in the 20th, the interval between the world wars. No single impulse unites such books as *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Sun Also Rises*, or even *Leaves of Grass* and *The Bridge*. But in the background of all these books has been an intellectual movement that could act as an incitement to their authors, and that saw itself as preparing the way for genius. The sort of figure who dominated such a movement used to be called a literary radical. I will use the phrase here because, provisionally, it helps to define Emerson. What he did was to describe, with sufficient plainness and sufficient profoundness, a condition of personal independence. And that was enough.

The great practical effect of Emerson's teaching was that it gave an idea of originality to a generation that included Whitman, Dickinson, Melville, along with others who seem minor talents only in that company. He accomplished this in a society where a shapeless conformity of opinion appeared to have taken hold forever. Indeed, if one tried to imagine an America free of Emerson's influence, the strictures of *Democracy in America* would turn into an accurate prophecy. As it is, they have come out looking a priori and short-sighted. Tocqueville simply did not bank on anyone like Emerson occurring.

This account may concede too much to the "great man" theory of history (in which, however, I believe). From another perspective Emerson was only the accidental success among many comparable types of the 1840s and 1850s. Evert Augustus Duyckinck, for example, and Cornelius Mathews, along with the critics, patrons, and entrepreneurs who made the subject of Perry Miller's *The Raven and the Whale*, set themselves up as New York's

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rivals to Concord, in the search for a native literature. They believed that they were looking for a home-grown epic to surpass Sir Walter Scott. What they wanted to foster, it seems clear in retrospect, was a gigantic second-rate literature, a sort of continuous collaborative American sublime, a high, flat, reliable, democratic achievement. It was not their fault that they could find nothing in that line big enough to satisfy their expectations. But when, from within their precincts, *Moby Dick* emerged, they were unequipped to appreciate it. The circumstance suggests that their ambition was essentially distinct from Emerson's. For the group around the first *Dial*—edited by Emerson and Margaret Fuller—formed an avant-garde in something like the modern sense. Other writers have noticed this, but the analogy has sometimes been called exotic, and I will try briefly to justify it.

An avant-garde differs from other societies for mutual promotion in only one way. It is willing to regard failure as a mark of election. It tells the artist, as Emerson told his young audience in "The American Scholar": "If the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him." This was a good translation of Wordsworth's injunction to "create the taste by which you are judged" (grant *nothing* to the existing taste); and in the details of his practice, Emerson adopted the strategy of the Lake school in English poetry half a century before. He settled in a place unknown to letters, gathered significant neighbors around him, treated all his younger disciples as equals; and occasionally, instead of a Preface, he issued a Declaration. He is not quite a miracle, for he knew very well what he was doing. His glory was that he did it. The defect of many commentaries on Emerson—especially those written in the 1940s and '50s, from an effort to interpret the "American Renaissance"—is that they regard him altogether as a special case. Often, this is a result of valuing him as an encourager while underrating him as a writer. I believe it is more interesting to think of him as a *beginning*: someone, like Rousseau, whom others have to return to before they can start for themselves.

In what follows I try to sketch a recurring pattern for our literature since Emerson. I borrow Matthew Arnold's idea of antithetical "epochs": the epoch of expansion, in which great works are created; and the epoch of concentration, in which critical thinking advances and the impetus is given for expansion in the next age. This pattern of course leaves out a good deal, and I use it without any pretense of caution. Beginning, then, with Emerson, we have had an age of concentration and expansion close together; a second age of concentration in the early years of our century, with the criticism of Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, and Waldo Frank; a second age of expansion, including Hemingway, Faulkner, Stevens, Frost, Hart Crane, Marianne Moore, Allen Tate, and William Carlos Williams, among others. What we see around us now, on the other hand, is probably not far different from the way things looked in 1884. The ages of contraction (to add a third term to Arnold's pair)—the age before Emerson's, the Gilded Age, ours—coincide with periods of retrenchment in politics. That is why the names Van Buren, Harrison, Tyler, Polk, Hayes, Garfield, Cleveland, McKinley, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan make such a homogeneous list.

A change for the better usually happens like this. A small number of writers get together, agree that their culture has lost vitality, and decide to blame everything on its habitual arrangements, which they hold in contempt. If their analysis succeeds in fostering a literature that is powerful, the analysis and the literature stand doubly vindicated. But the important moment for a literary radical comes earlier, when he discovers that his analysis is widely shared; and the effect of such moments is to give fresh life to other radicals, who seek political remedies. There is a sense—better understood by historians than by critics—in which an Emerson makes room for a William Lloyd Garrison. What began as a program of literary revisionism thus works its way into all the channels of reform. One can see this in Emerson's writing, even when his subject is something as narrow as the use of meter in poetry:

> Great is the art,
> Great be the manners, of the bard.
> He shall not his brain encumber
> With the coil of rhythm and number;

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But, leaving rule and pale forethought,
He shall aye climb
For his rhyme.
"Pass in, pass in," the angels say,
"In to the upper doors,
Nor count compartments of the floors,
But mount to paradise
By the stairway of surprise."

It is, on a narrow view, technical advice to poets about their craft. But there seems to me a nominal rather than a practical difference between this and his "Note to the Reader" of the *Dial*, written for the first issue in collaboration with Margaret Fuller:

> The spirit of the time is felt by every individual with some difference,—to each one casting its light upon the objects nearest to his temper and habits of thought. . . . In all its movements, it is peaceable, and in the very lowest marked with triumphant success. Of course, it rouses the opposition of all which it judges and condemns, but it is too confident in its tone to comprehend an objection, and so builds no outworks for possible defenses against contingent enemies. It has the step of Fate, and goes on existing like an oak or river, because it must.

The step of Fate and the stairway of surprise, the house without compartments and the fortress without outworks, offer variations on a single trope with a single moral: the power of individuals is equal to the power of fate.

Emerson's admirers, who liked his cunning, still heard the same sermon no matter what the text. It taught that a poem of 1350 lines could be written proclaiming "oneself." Or it made the state appear as a contingent enemy to the man who would not pay taxes for an evil war. Responses like these have the terrible simplic-

Randolph Bourne

War and the Intellectuals

The results of war on the intellectual class are already apparent. Their thought becomes little more than a description and justification of what is going on. They turn upon any rash one who continues idly to speculate. Once the war is on, the conviction spreads that individual thought is helpless, that the only way one can count is as a cog in the great wheel. There is no good holding back. We are told to dry our unnoticed and ineffective tears and plunge into the great work. Not only is everyone forced into line, but the new certitude becomes idealized. It is a noble realism which opposes itself to futile obstruction and the cowardly refusal to face facts. This realistic boast is so loud and sonorous that one wonders whether realism is always a stern and intelligent grappling with realities. May it not be sometimes a mere surrender to the actual, an abdication of the ideal through a sheer fatigue from intellectual suspense? The pacifist is roundly scolded for refusing to face the facts, and for retiring into his own world of sentimental desire. But is the realist, who refuses to challenge or criticize facts, entitled to any more credit than that which comes from following the line of least resistance? The realist thinks he at least can control events by linking himself to the forces that are moving. Perhaps he can. But if it is a question of controlling war, it is difficult to see how the child on the back of a mad elephant is to be any more effective in stopping the beast than is the child who tries to stop him from the ground. The ex-humanitarian, turned realist, sneers at the snobbish neutrality, colossal conceit, crooked thinking, dazed sensibilities of those who are still unable to find any balm of consolation for this war. We manufacture consolations here in America while there are probably not a dozen men fighting in Europe who did not long ago give up every reason for their being there except that nobody knew how to get them away.

But the intellectuals whom the crisis has crystallized into an acceptance of war have put themselves into a terrifyingly strategic position. It is only on the craft, in the stream, they say, that one has any chance of controlling the current forces for liberal purposes. If we obstruct, we surrender all power for influence. If we responsibly approve, we then retain our power for guiding. We will be listened to as responsible thinkers, while those who obstructed the coming of war have committed intellectual suicide and shall be cast into outer darkness. Criticism of the ruling powers will only be accepted from those intellectuals who are in sympathy with the general tendency of the war. Well, it is true that they may guide, but if their stream leads to disaster and the frustration of national life, is

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ity Emerson asked for but distrusted. He was, in consequence, the cruelest satirist of his own followers: he called Brook Farm "a perpetual picnic, a French Revolution in small, an Age of Reason in a patty-pan." Yet his warnings were directed against sects rather than causes, and in his 1851 address on the Fugitive Slave Law he told a Concord audience that it was "a law which every one of you will break on the earliest occasion." I quote these familiar judgments to show that his saying, "Whenever a man comes, there comes revolution," was merely an adequate description of the way his thinking had mattered in his own life. But his most solid effect may be seen in the lives of others who would have been free minds anyway, but were made bolder by his example. Margaret Fuller can stand for these; and, from an Emersonian point of view, I believe she had the better of her famous exchange with Carlyle, where she took a chance in speaking high-mindedly.

Fuller's "I accept the universe" meant that the universe was hers, to make of what she would (and change how she could). She was announcing her intention not to quit the contest, while acknowledging the conditions in which she was obliged to work. Carlyle, it seems, took her to be showing a polite condescension to the universe; and his reply, "By Gad, she'd better," was aimed at the paltriness of the human conceit that we have any choice in the matter. But, of course, we do have a choice. We can decide to risk everything for what we believe in, and there may be vastly different grounds of defense for such a move, even in thinkers as congenial as Emerson and Carlyle. Emerson's appeal, when he urged dis-

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their guiding any more than a preference whether they shall go over the right-hand or the left-hand side of the precipice? Meanwhile, however, there is comfort on board. Be with us, they call, or be negligible, irrelevant. Dissenters are already excommunicated. Irreconcilable radicals, wringing their hands among the debris, become the most despicable and impotent of men. There seems no choice for the intellectual but to join the mass of acceptance. But again the terrible dilemma arises—either support what is going on, in which case you count for nothing because you are swallowed in the mass and great incalculable forces bear you on; or remain aloof, passively resistant, in which case you count for nothing because you are outside the machinery of reality.

Is there no place left, then, for the intellectual who cannot yet crystallize, who does not dread suspense, and is not yet drugged with fatigue? The American intellectuals, in their preoccupation with reality, seem to have forgotten that the real enemy is War rather than imperial Germany. There is work to be done to prevent this war of ours from passing into popular mythology as a holy crusade. What shall we do with leaders who tell us that we go to war in moral spotlessness, or who make "democracy" synonymous with a republican form of government? There is work to be done in still shouting that all the revolutionary by-products will not justify the war, or make war anything else than the most noxious complex of all the evils that afflict men. There must be some to find no consolation whatever, and some to sneer at those who buy the cheap emotion of sacrifice. There must be some irreconcilables left who will not even accept the war with walrus tears. There must be some to call unceasingly for peace, and some to insist that the terms of settlement shall be not only liberal but democratic. There must be some intellectuals who are not willing to use the old discredited counters again and to support a peace which would leave all the old inflammable materials of armament lying about the world. There must still be opposition to any contemplated "liberal" world-order founded on military coalitions. The "irreconcilable" need not be disloyal. He need not even be "impossibilist." His apathy towards war should take the form of a heightened energy and enthusiasm for the education, the art, the interpretation that make for life in the midst of the world of death. The intellectual who retains his animus against war will push out more boldly than ever to make his case solid against it. The old ideals crumble; new ideals must be forged. His mind will continue to roam widely and ceaselessly. The thing he will fear most is premature crystallization. If the American intellectual class rivets itself to a "liberal" philosophy that perpetuates the old errors, there will then be need for "democrats" whose task will be to divide, confuse, disturb, keep the intellectual waters constantly in motion to prevent any such ice from ever forming.

From "The War and the Intellectuals" by Randolph Bourne, first published in the Seven Arts, *June 1917.* □

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obedience to the Fugitive Slave Law, was to a conscience that ought not to comply with the dictates of social expedience, or even the ultimate injunctions of social order. Carlyle's appeal, when he backed the South in the Civil War, was to an ideal duty, with fighting representatives in the actual world, who were to be honored as an active principle of order and the preservers of the spirit of a race. This is the light in which his witty reply must be read, and in this light it is honest enough, yet coarse and contemptible.

For we know what acceptances he had in view. In case we have forgotten, Emerson brings them all together in one sentence of a letter: "Carlyle is no idealist in opinions, but a protectionist in political economy, aristocrat in politics, epicure in diet, goes for murder, money, punishment by death, slavery, and all the petty abominations, tempering them with epigrams." Fuller knew most of this as well as Emerson. And yet, after a meeting not much tempered with epigrams, she found a use for Carlyle, as he could not for her, and published an appreciation in the *New York Tribune*:

> His works are true, to blame and praise him, the Siegfried of England, great and powerful, if not quite invulnerable, and of a might rather to destroy evil than to legislate for good. At all events, he seems to be what destiny intended, and represents fully a certain side; so we make no remonstrance as to his being and proceeding for himself, though we sometimes must for us.

She speaks here on behalf of those who do want to legislate for good—"we sometimes must for us." She is determined nevertheless to build with such materials as the time affords, however intractable in appearance. We can use Carlyle for his hatred of the laissez-faire system, though, to arrive at something better, we need to think beyond his sense of "the duty to be intolerant."

The generosity of the verdict is Fuller's own, but it owes its confidence to Emerson's thought that genius is serviceable in spite of itself—that it cannot even be known, except as it assists the practical ends of those who admire it. He wrote in "The Over-Soul":

> That which we are, we shall teach, not voluntarily but involuntarily. Thoughts come into our minds by avenues which we never left open, and thoughts go out of our minds through avenues which we never voluntarily opened. Character teaches over our head.

So, once we have seen past the words of a writer, or the acts of a leader, to the soul that produced them both, it turns out that we are looking at something in ourselves. Emerson has more than one name to describe what we recover then. But whatever he calls it, he is sure that it has the power to alter traditions and laws as well as customs and habits. He saw the extravagance of his claim, and warned: "I unsettle all things." The tendency of his writing is to break down the boundaries that separate literary invention from the conduct of life.

III

Since Emerson, the project of literary radicalism has never been isolable from an ambition to reform our social arrangements. At the same time, it has resisted any steady collaboration with the short-term plans of reformers. It starts as a general hope, touching those who sympathize with movements outside literature, yet it ends in a general bewilderment. The strength of our individualism in culture appears to have been paid for by the eclecticism, the impatient or capricious energy, and above all the discontinuity of our radicalism in politics. The reason the balance works out this way is that, between cultural and political radicalism, the former adds up to the stronger tradition. Every American is born with a little of it. The pattern holds true to such an extent that some people have a special name for left-wing writers who think consistently about politics: they call them "European-style radicals." That label, if unfair, is at any rate intelligible, and we would be better off if it were not. But sometimes, the only way of changing an old story is to retell its happier episodes, in the hope that their atmosphere will invigorate. I turn accordingly from Emerson's group to their successors, the social critics whose work began in earnest about 1915.

In *America's Coming-of-Age*, Van Wyck Brooks argued that our official and popular cultures had taken opposite paths in the 18th century, and continued apart ever since, with results disabling for both. He allegorized the

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split by adopting the names "lowbrow" (for a writer like Franklin) and "highbrow" (for a writer like Edwards). The first type was marked chiefly by the instincts of gregarious self-advancement, the second chiefly by the duties of solitary speculation; and according to Brooks, they had joined only once, almost freakishly, in the writings of Whitman, whom he therefore called a "middlebrow." These types are cartoons. Yet they belong recognizably to a life we still know, where the literacy of our neighbors has nothing to do with their conversability. Liberals call the result pluralism, and think it the very stuff of democracy. Brooks, on the contrary, felt that while capitalism thrived on such divisions, democracy grew weaker from them. Searching our tradition for a cause of the trouble, he came up with Emerson, whose thinking assured that we would remain content with our discrete virtues: for the lowbrow a vulgar gusto, for the highbrow an austere refinement. In short, the personal culture that Emerson invented had foreclosed the possibility of a common culture, even as it made ideals a redundancy for self-reliant men of action:

> The social ideal of Emerson . . . is a sort of composite of the philosopher, the mystic, the skeptic, the poet, the writer and the man of the world. I wonder what passed through the mind of the American business man of Emerson's day when he heard all those phrases [of Emerson's], phrases so unrelated to the springs of action within himself. Did he feel that his profound instincts had been touched and unified, did he see opening before him the line of a distinguished career, lighted up by a sudden dramatization of his own finest latent possibilities? Did he not rather, with a degree of reason, say to himself: "These papers will serve very well to improve my mind. I shall read them when I have the time"? And did he not thereupon set to work accumulating all the more dollars in order that he might have the more time to cultivate his mind—in legal phrase—after the event?
>
> Looked at from this side, Emerson has all the qualities of the typical baccalaureate sermon; and the baccalaureate sermon, as we know, beautiful as it often is, has never been found inconveniently inconsistent with the facts and requirements of business life.

My argument thus far has been that Emerson is so expansive a friend of revolt as to be favorable to no particular party. Brooks, however, implies that this in effect makes him a valuable servant of the status quo, which in America is itself expansionist. I believe that his interpretation is wrong; but it was sufficiently provoked. It reminds us of Emerson's insistence, in a work like *The Conduct of Life*, that he be taken at once as a detached aphorist and a guide to worldly advancement—part of his appeal that Melville captured in *Pierre*, with its portrait of Plotinus Plinlimmon, the half-inspired enthusiast with an eye for the main chance. Yet Brooks, in a passage like this, was also reacting against the pragmatists, that is, against another school of Emerson's readers.

Brooks understood pragmatism as a decadent idealism that had betrayed genius in the name of practical power. He refers specifically to James and Dewey, but otherwise leaves the charge unexplained, and I can offer only a surmise about what he might have said. Emerson's own thinking had been an idealist answer to the materialism he supposed was becoming the dominant philosophy of the age. His purpose was to give us back the world of our ideas, and hence of our ideals and spiritual laws, as identical with the world of practice. He meant this scrupulously: all the disposable materials of nature and art, which he summed up as "commodity," were an outward realization of "Man thinking," a writing-it-large for the slow of wit. Now, James and Dewey saw themselves as fighting the same battle, a little further on. But idealism as they knew it was an exhausted orthodoxy of a thoroughly antiempirical character. When, therefore, James taught his readers to care for the "live option"—when Dewey redefined truth as "warranted assertibility"—they were seeking to make practical wisdom again coincide with the highest instincts of men and women. To act as if one's beliefs were part of a total drift that might some day carry everything with it, was to be *sound* on the only going definition of soundness. The life that these pragmatists wanted to encourage was not mainly or even largely "business life."

Yet Brooks's analysis did not depend, after all, on a questioning of motives. Rather, he took it as simply demonstrable that the alliance suggested by pragmatism—between new suc-

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cesses of any kind and the creation of new truths—left radicals on a lower moral ground than before, in their contest with the heroes of industry and commerce. All this remains implicit in Brooks's discussion. It became a conscious emphasis in the writings of Randolph Bourne, who had started as an admirer of the pragmatists. After Dewey lent his support to American participation in the war, Bourne published a record of his disenchantment, in an essay called "Twilight of the Idols":

> To those of us who have taken Dewey's philosophy almost as our American religion, it never occurred that values could be subordinated to technique. We were instrumentalists, but we had our private utopias so clearly before our minds that the means fell always into place as contributory. And Dewey, of course, always meant his philosophy, when taken as a philosophy of life, to start with values. But there was always that unhappy ambiguity in his doctrine as to just how values were created, and it became easier and easier to assume that just any growth was justified and almost any activity valuable so long as it achieved ends. The American, in living out this philosophy, has habitually confused results with product, and has been content with getting somewhere without asking too closely whether it was the desirable place to get.

Earlier I quoted Emerson's disclaimer, "I unsettle all things"; and it is worth recalling here that his next words were: "No facts are to me sacred; none are profane; I simply experiment, an endless seeker with no Past at my back." For Bourne, this had become the voice of American capitalism. It gave the master-clue to the workings of a state that was only healthy when at war.

On this analysis pragmatism, itself the offspring of idealism, was eventually converted to the uses of realism in the vulgar sense, which implies a hostility to all ideals. The hope before the war had been to fortify the individual in his plural relations with life, by representing his ability to shape it variously and inventively, from one situation to another. But a mistaking of product for results led the pragmatist (*we instrumentalists*, as Bourne puts it) to think well of those already employed in reshaping the world. This included the entrepreneurs of business and war. I do not want to enter into the merits of Bourne's view; but one thing about his argument is certainly attractive: it, too, is pragmatic. World War I was a disgraceful period in our intellectual life, and Bourne proposed to test radical ideas by the character they showed in surviving it. He had no stomach for truckling or compromise; in "The War and the Intellectuals" he wrote: "This realistic boast is so loud and sonorous that one wonders whether realism is always a stern and intelligent grappling with realities. May it not be a mere surrender to the actual, an abdication of the ideal through sheer fatigue from intellectual suspense?" About the same time, Brooks was writing a polemic against literary critics who pleaded for realism of a well-behaved sort.

Such critics exist at all times, and often speak on behalf of the imperative of the actual, or some similar phrase. The phrase always means, "Show us what is good about our society (we are so lost in it that occasionally we forget)." In *Letters and Leadership*, Brooks's immediate target was an assertion by W. D. Howells that "the more smiling aspects of life" are "the more American," and a request of novelists that they be faithful to our "well-to-do actualities." This thought has lately been echoed by Joseph Epstein in a review of two novels in *Commentary*, which concludes: "of plain pessimism . . . we have had quite enough. Let, please, the sun shine in." Brooks replied in 1918: "Could one ask for a more essential declaration of artistic bankruptcy than that? For what does it amount to, this declaration? It identifies the reality of the artist's vision with what is accepted as reality in the world about him." Artists, Brooks added, who do follow such advice "do not so much mature at all as externalize themselves in a world of externalities." One can expand this statement in a way that seems consistent with Brooks's intentions. An artist works from an internal life—thoughts, feelings, impressions—which he seeks to render external. There is no *thing* (at once diffuse and substantial) that the word "reality" helps to explain. There are only the available externalities. If we like some of them, we may call them actual; if we dislike others, we may call them pessimistic or less smiling. An artist is sometimes improved by a critic

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who shows how his work is careless or foppish. No artist has ever been improved by a critic who urges him to portray a certain kind of subject, or eliminate a certain mood.

IV

The legacy of Emerson, Fuller, James, Dewey, Bourne, and Brooks is what we still have to build on. A sustained effort to revise their style of cultural tolerance came in the 1930s and '40s, from the Eliotic-Trotskyist group around *Partisan Review*. These were critics who pointed to a recent past, and said: "The great thing is already there." They wrote with equal assurance as skeptical observers of American culture and as monumental historians of the European avant-garde. By this double emphasis, their work appeared to offer a new conception of intellectual freedom. The Emersonian sermon against public opinion is simple though hard to act upon. It tells us to stand apart from our society. The Eliotic-Trotskyist sermon against mass culture was less simple, and perhaps less hard to act upon. It told us to stand apart from one element of our culture. What, exactly, did the suggestion amount to?—for anyone, I mean, but especially for an American? We have to come at this a long way around. In his 1939 essay "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," Clement Greenberg imagined a Russian peasant after a long day's toil, offered him a choice of pictures to look at—on the one hand a battle scene by Repin, on the other a cubist abstraction by Picasso—and supposed he would prefer the Repin, on the ground that it was familiar. Repin's picture affords a "wealth of self-evident meanings" by which the peasant "recognizes and sees things in the way in which he recognizes and sees things outside of pictures—there is no discontinuity between art and life, no need to accept a convention." The notion of a familiarity that may be realized in the absence of any convention is of course very odd. Nevertheless, Greenberg, who in this may be taken to represent many others, made the following deductions from his reading of the hypothetical incident.

First, the taste for mass culture is instinctive in an industrial society. (The case of the peasant accidentally proves too much, by suggesting that it may be instinctive even in a state of nature.) Second, art alone has the task of modifying conventions; and the conventions themselves are defined formalistically: "the arts," as Greenberg said in another place, "have been hunted back to their mediums," and a work only exempts itself from mass culture by virtue of an emphatic concern with its medium. Third, in this situation—where art, if it is to be vital, is fated to be modernist, and the appeal of modernist works is confined to a few—the distance between the cultural and political avant-garde has widened irreparably.

The diagnosis turns on the assumption that avant-garde artists have the same superior indifference to mass culture as avant-garde critics, when in fact their attitude has more often been one of ambivalent fascination. But I suspect, for American readers, this weighs very little by comparison with a more local objection. Substitute a New England yeoman for the Russian peasant, and what happens to the fable? It is refuted by the miscellaneous power of his emblems and symbols. "In the political processions," Emerson observed, "Lowell goes in a loom, and Lynn in a shoe, and Salem in a ship." The arts do not disdain these things: "Some stars, lilies, leopards, a crescent, a lion, an eagle, or other figure which came into credit God knows how, on an old rag of bunting, blowing in the wind on a fort at the ends of the earth, shall make the blood tingle under the rudest or most conventional exterior." We can hardly know culture at all, except as just such a mixed entity.

So we easily stray across the boundaries that separate the exalted from the humble—categories that, with us, are always being revised for present purposes, and that a single sharp challenge may suffice to upset again. Nobody knew this better than Emerson, or kept it more constantly in mind. He sympathized with a new thought at the moment of its invention, and left others to plan its consolidation. In the arts he did without ideas of high and low. In religion, long before, he had moved from the doctrine of a visible church to that of a hidden personal divinity. His motive was a readiness to suffer inexpediences as the cost of fresh truths. Without something of the same sentiment, culture would cease to be a vivid abstraction, and turn

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into the sum of its institutional conquests. But "The Invisible Avant-Garde," which John Ashbery christened in an essay of that title, has always sustained a belief that culture is not identical with cultivation. The belief continues because the visible church takes many forms—a congregation, a board of censors, and an academy being only the most persistent.

Their successors appear to be "the media." But, writing in 1968, Ashbery saw all of these as contingent enemies, and remembered the example of Jackson Pollock in the late 1940s:

> At that time I found the avant-garde very exciting, just as the young do today, but the difference was that in 1950 there was no sure proof of the existence of the avant-garde. To experiment was to have the feeling that one was poised on some outermost brink. In other words, if one wanted to depart, even moderately, from the norm, one was taking one's life—one's life as an artist—into one's hands. A painter like Pollock for instance was gambling everything on the fact that he *was* the greatest painter in America, for if he wasn't, he was nothing, and the drops would turn out to be random splashes from the brush of a careless housepainter. It must often have occurred to Pollock that there was just a possibility that he wasn't an artist at all, that he had spent his life "toiling up the wrong road to art," as Flaubert said of Zola. But this very real possibility is paradoxically just what makes the tremendous excitement of his work. It is a gamble against terrific odds. Most reckless things are beautiful in some way, and recklessness is what makes experimental art beautiful, just as religions are beautiful because of the strong possibility that they are founded on nothing.

The situation today, as Ashbery describes it, when the artist commonly finds himself "at the center of a cheering mob," is doubtless more enervating than in the heyday of the avant-garde, when an interval of decent neglect was still allowed. Yet the present mood is not less favorable to creation; it merely warrants a change of tactics, for the artist "must now bear in mind that *he*, not *it*, is the avant-garde." This I take to be what Emersonian critics from the first have been saying in other words.

I am aware that there is a strong and a weak version of my argument. In the strong version, we Americans are all potentially of the avant-garde. In the weak version, this turns out to be so because for us the avant-garde is only another name for radical individualism. I do not claim that political radicals ought to take satisfaction from the results as they stand. But it does seem possible to view them as a broken series of victories; they have too often been recounted as a single continuous defeat. The encouraging parts of the story, varied as they are, may seem to lack a moral about the uses of art. One reason is that art meant anything for Emerson—"beauty," "language," "discipline"—anything, that is, outside the world of commodity. He concluded every attempt to define it further with a pleasant but inscrutable compliment. And evidently, for an object with this range of meanings, we have to be content with a surmise as to its function. I have quoted some instances already, but saved the best for last. It comes from Kenneth Burke, whose career almost spans the period from Bourne's generation to mine, and who wrote more than 50 years ago in *Counter-Statement*: "An art may be of value purely through preventing a society from becoming too assertively, too hopelessly, itself." □

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Lewis Coser

Mitterrand's Technocratic Socialism

With a Comment by Michael Harrington and a Reply

Last May I attended a lecture by Laurent Fabius, then minister of industry and now prime minister, at one of the fairly exclusive left-wing private political clubs in Paris. The audience consisted largely of academics, civil servants, and political journalists. Fabius gave an accomplished presentation of budgetary, financial, and, above all, industrial issues. He fielded technical questions in a confident and sure-footed manner. But then someone asked: "What is the vision [*l'imaginaire*] of the government?" Fabius looked perplexed, helpless, and uttered a few meaningless phrases. Nor did he come up with anything worthwhile when similar questions were raised by others in the audience. This superior technocrat, graduate of the elite schools of France, had never given any serious thought to such questions. He knew all about means, and hardly anything about ends.

What I witnessed there was not the failure of an individual but the failure of the entire Mitterrand regime. As I reported in these pages earlier, after Mitterrand came to power in 1981, he began with a flurry of ambitious political and economic moves. The government proceeded with measures of decentralization that, so it hoped, would loosen the stranglehold of a central bureaucracy that had dominated France since the days of Napoleon. It abolished the death penalty, did away with exceptional military tribunals, reduced the standard work week by an hour, increased the rights and representation of workers in the workplace, and made various improvements in social security. Most of these measures, admirable as they were, were hardly particularly socialist in character. These were steps that could have been taken by a left-liberal regime. But in France, given its rigid social structure, it fell to Socialists to implement what elsewhere in Europe had been realized by left-liberal forces, often, of course, with the help of social democratic parties.

When it came to economic matters, the Mitterrand regime in its first year in office miscalculated disastrously. Banking on a rapid recovery from the worldwide recession, it aimed at stimulating purchasing power on the domestic scene and at increasing exports. When the worldwide recession, instead of easing, increased further, and when it became clear that the large-scale nationalization of banking and key industrial enterprises required enormous outlays by the government, France's budget deficits increased sharply. Above all, the foreign debts multiplied.

After a honeymoon that lasted only a year, the government reversed its course. In 1982, and even more pronouncedly in 1983, it opted for a program of austerity and fiscal restraint. Where only a year earlier the president and the premier had talked about huge increases in the production of steel and coal, they now proceeded to close pits and inefficient steel plants. As a result unemployment increased rapidly,

As I have reported in these pages previously, much of the trouble the Mitterrand regime has encountered stems from international economic factors over which it has had very little control. I do not go here into this matter again, but my criticism of the Mitterrand regime should be read against a background of international monetary and financial conditions that would have made things very difficult even if the government had been less inept and more imaginative.

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especially in basic smokestack industries. It is now estimated that unemployment, which hovered around 2 million in the early Mitterrand period, is likely to approach 2.5 million, that is, well over 10 percent of the work force, at the end of the current year.

The politics of austerity since 1982 has not only led to higher unemployment, but also to the gradual whittling away of the purchasing power of the lower-middle and working class. This was especially resented since it followed upon a long period of steady increases under de Gaulle and his successors. It now seemed that while the "bourgeois" regimes had been able to "give," even if only through a trickle-down effect, the Socialists were "taking away" what had previously been gained.

It would be a mistake, however, to account for the present crisis of the left in France only in terms of economic miscalculations. Had the Mitterrand regime been able to inspire enthusiasm and dedication in a major part of the population, it might have weathered economic difficulties. It is its utter lack of a comprehensive vision and inspiring ideals, which could bring forth a willingness to endure some sacrifice in the here and now, that accounts for the present miserable standing of the regime in the eyes of a majority of the population. To explain why this is the case requires recalling a few facts about the political structure of the French left.

In most European countries, socialist and social democratic parties are mass parties or at least parties firmly rooted in a mass union movement. In Sweden, 92 percent of all wage earners are unionized, and unionization of the other Scandinavian countries ranges from 62 to 85 percent. In Austria, Germany, and Britain, a high percentage of the work force are members of unions that are closely tied to mass social democratic or labor parties. In contrast, only some 20 percent of all French wage earners belong to unions and, even more important, they are split between four sharply divided union organizations (not counting the separate unions of teachers and middle-managers): the Communist-dominated CGT, the Socialist-oriented yet autonomous CFDT, the apolitical business union, *Force Ouvrière*, and the Christian union. As a consequence, the Socialist government has no reliable transmission belt to the mass of wage earners, and no secure base in the workplace. While right-wing and centrist regimes can always be assured of support from the powerful and unified organizations of the industrial and financial powers that be, no such base is available to the Socialists.

The weakness of the union movement might have been compensated for by a strong mass organization of the Socialist party. But in fact this party is weak both numerically and organizationally. The ratio of members to voters is, to my knowledge, the lowest in all of Europe. In addition, the bulk of the membership is made up of teachers, public employees, and other white-collar workers. Although it counts many sons and daughters of workers in its ranks, it has hardly any working-class membership. It has a good number of upwardly mobile members with working-class backgrounds, but it is almost completely divorced from the working class itself. As a result, while members of the working and lower-middle class voted for Mitterrand in 1981 because they believed him to be *for* the people, they never had reason to believe that he represented government *by* the people. And now many have come to feel that it is a government by technocrats for technocratic goals.

Not only is the Socialist party organizationally and numerically weak, it is also split into a number of factions. There is a "left" under Jean-Pierre Chevènement, which is protectionist and wishes to cut as many relations as possible between the French economy and the rest of the capitalist world, so as to build a kind of tight little French socialist island. There is a decentralizing and participatory-democratic wing under Michel Rocard. There is also the technocratic wing closest to Mitterrand, led by such men as Jacques Delors and Laurent Fabius, and there are the coteries of municipal bosses such as Gaston Deferre, the king of Marseille, and Pierre Mauroy, the master of Lille. Deferre and Mauroy have now been eliminated from the Fabius government, but all the other tendencies are represented in his cabinet.

Given the lack of dependable transmission

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belts to a popular base, it was to be predicted, as it has now come to pass, that the technocrats would win over the populists. The leader of the "left" wing, despite his previous protestations about the need not to break with the Communists, is part of the new government, and the Rocard wing is also represented, but the balance has shifted in the technocratic direction.

A FEW COMMENTS on the Communist party are in order. The Communists participated in the Mauroy government but have now decided to stay out. The CP has clearly come upon evil days. It has lost both members and voters; its share of young people's ballots is down to 6 percent; and it hit its lowest mark in the recent European elections, where it got barely 11 percent of the votes, its lowest point in 60 years and roughly the same proportion as the extreme right-wing, semifascist National Front. While the Communists lay low in the first year or two of the Mitterrand regime, they became ever more militant in their criticism of governmental policies in 1983 and 1984. For over a year they attempted a complicated balancing act in voting for the government at least on key issues while, together with the CGT, capitalizing on popular discontent with government policies, sharply criticizing its policies. They have now left the government largely because Mitterrand and Fabius were no longer willing to tolerate their Janus-like behavior.

Although the Communists are now likely to make hay of the difficulties of the new government and to ride a wave of popular discontent, they are severely hampered by the fact that their major bases are precisely in the declining smokestack industries. In steel, coal, automobile, and shipbuilding there will be huge layoffs in the months and years to come, and unemployed workers, or those forced into early retirement, are by no means as easily mobilized as employed workers. Privatized individuals provide no secure bases for an offensive political strategy. What is more, the CP has lost the support of all major intellectuals, and it is slowly being pushed into a marginal position from which it will find it very hard to extricate itself. Nevertheless, the Socialists, unless they decide on a determined "opening to the right" in the 1986 elections—of which more later—will have to keep open some bridges to the Communists if they hope for their votes in the second round of the elections.

The CP is enfeebled and shrinking; it no longer attracts the young the way it did 10 or 20 years ago; its organizations have ossified, and its stereotyped message works only with an aging core of true believers. What is more, all its surface devotion to democracy sounds hollow given the fact that, as distinct from its Italian and Spanish counterparts, it has never clearly repudiated its ties to the Kremlin. The CP "line" reminds one of the outspoken words that Louis Veuillot, a 19th-century Ultramontane Catholic reactionary, addressed to the liberals of his day: "When you are the masters, we claim complete liberty for ourselves because your principles require it, and when we are the masters, we refuse it to you because it is contrary to our principles."

• Given the current disarray on the left, it stands to reason that the right has become very cocky and confident. It is divided into roughly three major camps. The RPR, led by Jacques Chirac, is now the dominating force. It is strongly authoritarian in orientation, while still preaching the gospel of the free market and pointing with admiration to the "achievements" of Thatcher and Reagan. Its traditions are Gaullist and Bonapartist, and it is solidly supported by the Catholic middle- and upper-middle classes. Were elections to be held tomorrow, the RPR would surely win a plurality of the electorate.

The centrist UDF—led by Raymond Barre, the former prime minister, and Giscard d'Estaing, the former president—is much less united than Chirac's party. It is less authoritarian, and more fully committed to an unfettered market economy. The UDF capitalizes on the many former leftists' disillusionment with social planning and argues that such planning "inevitably" leads to totalitarianism. Its traditions are anchored in the liberal-centrist traditions of the July monarchy (1830–48). But while it profits from the current disaffection with planning, it is internally divided, and torn between several highly competitive would-be standard-bearers.

Finally, there has arisen a powerful move-

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ment of the extreme right under the semifascist demagogue Jean-Marie Le Pen. That Le Pen has been able to attract roughly 10 percent of the French electorate in the recent European elections is extremely disturbing. Le Pen's major slogans are xenophobic appeals against foreigners, especially North Africans, who make up a significant portion of the unskilled and semiskilled labor force and suffer from high unemployment. His anti-Semitism, which he recently has toned down, is nevertheless clearly present.

Le Pen is a racist demagogue of the first order. What is especially frightening is that much of his vote does not come from the traditional right—practicing Catholics are relatively weak in the ranks of the National Front—but from disaffected Communists and other alienated, former left voters. Le Pen has begun to control the swing voters that might decide contests between the traditional right and the traditional left. Even though he has been repudiated by the RPR and the UDF top leadership, many of their local leaders have not disdained an alliance with Le Pen when the going got tough. This tendency, I am afraid, will be reinforced in the next two years, and it bodes ill for French democracy.

• The recent losses of the CP and the SP in both local and national elections and the lack of mass support in the form of a strong party and/or strong unions have led Mitterrand to reorient his policies toward the center. Convinced that the CP/SP alliance that brought him to power in 1981 will not prevail in the 1986 elections, he has loosened remaining ties to the CP and is plainly casting about for new allies in the center. His abandonment of the school reform legislation that was meant to reinforce public controls over Catholic schools and has raised a storm of protest on the right and in the center, his tax reductions that will mainly favor the well-to-do, and a host of other signs point to his determination to reorient his policies toward an alliance with parties of the center. Such a turn will bring him into more accentuated conflicts with the CP and might also lead to some defections within the SP. Mitterrand seems to have decided that a weakening of his ties to some force on the left is worth taking in his stride if it can be compensated for by strengthened support elsewhere.

Mitterrand has no particular political vision, in fact he doesn't have many convictions. He has many prejudices but few beliefs. He grew up in the political environment of the postwar Fourth Republic, one of the least principled periods of French political history. An intensely vain and ambitious man, he will cling to power even if that would mean discarding previous supporters and previous programmatic pronouncements. His government is now dominated by technocrats who value efficiency above all. He is committed, and that is probably his only real commitment, to the modernization of French industry and the rebuilding of French national power. If, to achieve these goals, social justice and social equality will have to be put on a back burner, that's just too bad. When Ramsay MacDonald broke with the British Labour party to build a national union with the traditional forces of the right, he surely felt a measure of unease and guilt for having abandoned the socialist principles to which he had adhered for a lifetime. Mitterrand, whose socialist past is of relatively recent vintage, would have fewer scruples.

A move to the right by Mitterrand will be facilitated by the marked decline of his support in the ranks of prominent left intellectuals, and by the numerical decline and loss of influence of these intellectuals. In previous periods, prominent intellectuals, such as Gide, Mauriac, or Malraux before the war, and Camus, Sartre, or Merleau-Ponty in the postwar years, served as a kind of cultural superego to left politicians. They formulated and defined a left credo that, even though often utopian, nevertheless reminded more pragmatic politicians that there were limits to realpolitik. They were central to the anti-Nazi ideological mobilization before the war, and they were in the vanguard of opposition to the colonial wars in Indochina and Algeria. Though they were often internally divided, they nevertheless lent their collective prestige to a politics of justice, equality, and freedom that had been the heritage of the left ever since the Dreyfus affair. As Herbert Lüthy once said, "The political repub-

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lic [was] still subject to the moral guardianship of the republic of letters."

There are now no intellectuals with the stature of their predecessors. Raymond Aron died last year, Michel Foucault passed away a few months ago, and the last towering figure, Lévi-Strauss, is 80 years old. The so-called New Philosophers are feeble epigones, and in almost all areas of French intellectual life one notes a pronounced decline in creativity. As in other periods of cultural decadence, the attention of the cultured public has turned to a nostalgic regard for the past and its alleged glories. Aron's memoirs and Sartre's letters to Simone de Beauvoir head the best-seller lists, and even the diaries of such relatively peripheral figures as Jean Cocteau command a great deal of attention.

When the Socialists came to power in 1981, they were sure that they would find enthusiastic support among the intellectuals. But left-wing intellectuals of less stature than Sartre or Camus have largely turned away from active support for the Mitterrand regime. French intellectuals, at least since the 1930s, were in their majority on the Socialist, near-Socialist, or Communist left, even though a minority supported the Vichy regime, or collaborated with the Nazi occupiers. In any case, since World War II, to be an intellectual has meant to be more or less on the left of the political spectrum. Yet it became clear soon after the Socialists' ascension to power in 1981 that only few among the major intellectuals supported them with any enthusiasm. Some of them, such as the official presidential spokesman Max Gallo and the opportunist Régis Debray, were attracted to the seats of power; most, however, not only refused official positions but showed a marked reluctance to support the government in any way. In contrast to the days of Léon Blum's Popular Front government, the intellectuals kept a cultivated distance from the Socialist house of power. What had happened? A tentative answer has to reach back to the conditions of French cultural life after the Liberation.

For many years after the end of the war, French intellectual life was dominated by Communists and fellow travelers. The CP had acquired enormous prestige by its massive participation in the Resistance movement, even though it had joined that movement only after the Nazis attacked the Soviet Union and not after the defeat of France. In the years of misery immediately following the war, and after the generous belief in a complete reconstruction of Europe under progressive-socialist auspices had been dashed, the Soviet Union presented for many French intellectuals a beacon of hope. Many of them joined the CP; others, like Jean-Paul Sartre and his circle, could not bring themselves to join but still looked eastward with a large measure of approbation or, at least, benevolent expectation. In those years the left-wing press, the major literary and philosophical journals, the publishing world as well as the mass media were largely dominated by Stalinists or, more often, by fellow travelers.

In subsequent years, the campaigns against NATO and German rearmament, against the colonial war in Vietnam, and in support of Algerian independence forged and reforged the unity of the French intellectual left. A Manichean vision where the Soviet Union and the Third World stood for the forces of light and America and the other capitalist powers stood for the forces of darkness dominated most intellectual discourse. To be sure, there were dissenting voices, such as that of Raymond Aron, but they were hardly listened to. In France, more than anywhere else in Western Europe, with the possible exception of Italy, the major current among intellectuals carried them eastward as well as leftward.

The fellow-traveling consensus began to break only with the Hungarian revolution of 1956 and its brutal suppression by Russian tanks. The split of the Soviet camp through the defection of Yugoslavia and China, and later the invasion of Afghanistan as well as the suppression of the Solidarity movement in Poland, further contributed to a turning away from Big Brother. But these events on the world scene were perhaps not as consequential in their impact on the French intellectual world as the publications of Solzhenitsyn, especially his books on the Gulag. Solzhenitsyn had considerable influence on American opinion, but his impact in France was much stronger. The

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French had succeeded for decades, through various strategies of selective inattention, in shielding themselves from the realities of Soviet totalitarianism. They hence lagged by several decades behind the awareness in American intellectual circles that the Soviet Union was a totalitarian nightmare. Solzhenitsyn broke the dike of collective repression as to the true nature of the Soviet regime.

It is a good thing that the Soviet myth is now as dead in France as it has been for decades in America. But unfortunately, as may frequently be the case when sudden revelations break though previous defenses, the subsequent reaction had so highly emotional a character that it resulted in wholesale abandonment among many intellectuals of previous rational moorings in the general traditions of the left. Leapfrogging over the left-liberal tradition, many landed on the right. They argued that, since the Soviet horror was based on the suppression of individual freedom and public liberty, therefore any planned society, any attempt to interfere with the "free market," would "inevitably" lead to totalitarianism. Through a kind of vicious syllogism they convinced themselves that planned social changes of whatever kind would be stepping stones on the road to totalitarian serfdom. Let me give only three salient examples of this mischievous intellectual trend.

• Jean-Marie Domenach, for decades the guiding spirit of the influential Christian socialist magazine *Esprit*, published last year a short book, significantly entitled *Letters to My Class Enemies*, in which he argued that he had been mistaken for many years in his belief that political freedom would be compatible with a socialist and planned direction of the economy. The horrors of Stalinism, Domenach argued, had cured him of any illusions about communism. The failures of national planning have shown him the virtues of the free market, and the ineptitudes of the tutelary state have convinced him of the virtues of unfettered individualism. Those intellectuals who still support Mitterrand are now his "class enemies."

• A similar trajectory from the left to the right marks the intellectual career of the man who is perhaps, next to Ferdinand Braudel, the most eminent historian of contemporary France, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie. The son of a Vichy minister who later took part in the Resistance, Ladurie joined the Communist party after the war. He left it in 1956 but for many years thereafter remained a man of the left. He has now publicly stated that he wishes no longer to be identified with left political views and attitudes, and that he will contribute to any publication that is ready to print his articles, be it on the left or the right.

• The names of Domenach and Le Roy Ladurie are not likely to be known beyond the narrow ranks of intellectuals. But everybody knows the singer and actor Yves Montand. He is, to be sure, no intellectual, but he is a thoughtful person with a long involvement in the politics of the fellow-traveling left. A kind of Frank Sinatra with brains, he recently had an immense impact on public opinion when he abjured his fellow-traveling past, in an hour-long interview on prime-time television, expressed some admiration for Ronald Reagan, and waxed enthusiastic about freedom, be it of expression or of the market.

Many similar ideological and political shifts could be adduced. A significant proportion of formerly left-wing intellectuals have either defected from left positions entirely, or have withdrawn into apolitical neutrality. Had the Mitterrand government been able to provide an inspiring vision similar to that provided earlier by a Jean Jaurès or Léon Blum, this rightward tide might well have been arrested or turned back. As it is, the lack of vision of this government of technocrats, even more so than its manifest lack of success on its own terms, has created a situation where intellectuals despise the government, and the government, no longer sustained by intellectual moral guidance, despises intellectuals. Both sides behave like spurned lovers frozen into rigid stances of hostility.

ALL THIS is not to say that the right has necessarily an easier time when it comes to ideological or intellectual issues. It stands nowadays for a weak state, that is, minimal intervention in economic affairs, and maximum freedom for

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the self-regulated market. But it also champions a strong and authoritarian state, deriding what it considers Mitterrand's inability to come to grips with crime in the street and his liberal "softness" in regard to punishment of criminals. The right points with envy and admiration to Thatcher and Reagan, extolling their support for deregulation, risk, and initiative. But the Bonapartist-authoritarian undercurrents on the right are much stronger than they are in Britain or in America, so that those who clamor for the freedom of the market are at the same time inclined to enforce so-called freedoms through bureaucratic and technocratic directives.

Similarly, the right professes to be appalled by the continued overcentralization of the French economy and society, while it is just as afraid as its Jacobin counterparts on the left of measures of decentralization. At bottom it hates local autonomy, which hampers technocratic direction from the Parisian center. When Thomas Hobbes wrote in his *Leviathan* that autonomous corporations are "many lesser Commonwealths in the bowels of a gr[e]ater, like worms in the entrails of a natural man," he expressed a view that is secretly shared by Jacobin technocrats on the left and Bonapartist technocrats on the right, even though the former may prattle of self-management and the latter of the benefits of unfettered markets.

I cannot help but be pessimistic about the future of socialism in France. The politics of modernization and technocratic planning, even if they are ultimately going to meet with some success, will surely not be implemented fast enough to lead to a reversal of the dismal economic situation by the time of the 1986 elections. This will be a powerful incentive for Mitterrand to move to an alliance with the "moderate" center. Such a move is likely to demoralize the left for a long time to come. Under such circumstances, a badly mauled left would become a malleable auxiliary of centrist politicians, quite as it was through most of the Third Republic. If Mitterrand does not undertake such a move, or if he does not succeed, the Socialist left might shrink again to the *quantité négligeable* it was in the years of de Gaulle's ascendancy.

There are, to be sure, some Socialist leaders, such as Michel Rocard, who might be inclined to start afresh, stressing democratic participation, self-management, and decentralization in opposition to technocratic planning, but they are for the time being neutralized by the technocrats and kept in check by appeals to Socialist unity. Those who think that you can recapture support by reducing income taxes are either fools or knaves. Where there is no vision, the left perishes. □

Michael Harrington Comments

I agree with most of what Lewis Coser writes about the crisis of French socialism. But on three separate counts, my emphasis would be a bit different.

• The problem of Mitterrand and his comrades was not the absence of a vision, but their loyal commitment to a vision that had become outmoded when they reached power. The "Socialist Project," adopted by the party in 1980 and the basis of the 1981 presidential and electoral campaign, was an attempt to synthesize traditional socialist ideas with the concerns about the quality of life that erupted in May 1968. The French socialist symbol of the fist and a rose was an attempt to state graphically the concept of a joining of power and beauty.

In the 1980 Socialist Project one finds a discussion, not simply of economic growth but of a "new kind of growth." "The quest for a new mode of life," that program said, "will give rise to new needs—housing, public services, the improvement of the framework of life, protection of the environment, and the struggle

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against pollution—though the present needs will not disappear. . . ." This new kind of growth was to be egalitarian, powered in part by a progressive redistribution of income, "autonomous" through controls on multinationals and a lessening of dependency on imported energy. The new kind of growth was to be "creative" in its emphasis, not simply upon research, but also on new opportunities for the individual, such as reduction of work time, and solidaristic in its commitment to the Third World through a global Keynesianism.

The practical measures that were to effect this vision included a program of left Keynesian economic stimuli that would channel resources disproportionately to the working poor (the "SMICards," or minimum-wage workers). The virtuous circle of growth thus set in motion through a redistributive intervention would provide surpluses allowing for industrial policy and planning to restructure French industry, for the creation of new jobs, and serve as the economic base for a "self-managed," decentralized socialism that would increase productivity through participation.

The problem, I would suggest, is not that Mitterrand lacked a vision—he not only had one but put it into practice, redeeming almost every single one of his campaign promises in a legislative whirlwind during 1981 and early 1982—but that his vision was based upon the assumptions of the '70s. Although the Socialist Project dates from 1980, its essential ideas were developed seven or eight years earlier, when conditions in France still permitted a vision of a virtuous circle of growth. Mitterrand and the Socialists came to power in an entirely different world than the one in which they had elaborated their theory and practice. They were then told by all the forecasts—including the official projections of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development—that a shallow and short recession would be followed by a strong recovery. As we know, the worst recession since the Great Depression hit the French—and the world—economy.

My reading of these developments differs from Lewis Coser's in that it puts less of an emphasis upon the subjective failures of the French and more stress on an economic transition that has subverted the economic wisdom of the left in every country. As Wolfgang Merkel put it in a recent analysis of the Italian Socialist party in *Die Neue Gesellschaft*, "In the years of economic growth, the European left pondered the democratization of the economy and redistribution. With the scarcity of resources and the accompanying structural problems of the welfare state [in recent years] the left was without any basic conceptions."

• My second difference in shading has to do with the intellectuals. When I was living and teaching in Paris in the spring of 1983, and even more so following the French press since then, I was appalled at the growth of fundamentalist free-enterprise illusions. A recent article in *Le Nouvel Observateur* by Jacques Julliard was entitled (in English in the original) "Goodbye Mao, Hello Ronnie." Some of the French intellectuals, Julliard rightly pointed out, can't think of two different ideas at the same time and therefore move from monomania to monomania. So it is with the soaring simplifications of the new French (free-enterprise) "liberalism," which totally ignores the social costs of its elegant supply-and-demand curves. "Mao," Julliard comments, "is being reborn with the features of Adam Smith." There is a 180-degree turn in content, but the methodology remains the same.

There are occasional reports that Arthur Laffer is high on the reading list at the Elysée, but the new finance minister in the Fabius government, Pierre Bérégovoy, made it quite clear in September that he understood the reactionary—and serendipitous—basis of the Reagan policy. Still, the romance of Silicon Valley is very much alive in Paris, even though *Business Week* recently documented that the days of entrepreneurial geniuses creating Apple computers in the garage are coming to an end. The French, alas, sometimes admire us badly and are about as accurate with regard to the Adam Smithian triumphs in California as they are about the tragicomic genius of Jerry Lewis.

• Finally, there is my most substantial difference with Lewis Coser: that he puts the essential—the position of France in the world econ-

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omy—in a final note. Let me just list a few of the structural constraints that weighed so heavily upon Mitterrand. Because of the policies of Giscard and Barre, there was deindustrialization in the French capital-goods sector. That meant, among many other things, that economic growth caused, rather than resolved, a deficit in the balance of payments, since it required a massive (50 percent) importation of machines to produce machines. That trend was then reinforced by the limits of national Keynesian politics in a world economy that was undergoing greater change than at any time in a hundred years. The last decades of the 20th century, like the last decades of the 19th, are witnessing a global transformation of all previous economic relationships. So French Socialist Keynesianism probably created more jobs in West Germany than in France.

The overvaluation of the French franc when Mitterrand took power put his country at a structural disadvantage vis-à-vis the world in general and the West Germans in particular. It is widely said that Michel Roccard advised the president-elect to devalue on inauguration day (much as did Olof Palme, Felipe González, and Mario Soares—who all had the advantage of having watched the first Mitterrand period). But then, socialists like Mitterrand (and Harold Wilson in the 1960s) often try to prove their "soundness" to an incredulous business community by being very conservative in international monetary matters. This imbalance, inherited from Giscard along with the deindustrialization of the capital-goods sector, was a major, and destructive, constraint upon Mitterrand. Indeed, one socialist economist, Serge-Christophe Kolm, has effectively argued that a more realistic monetary exchange policy would have alleviated many of the Socialist problems.

These pressures from the outside were then reinforced within France by the failure of the virtuous circle. The mode of paying for much of the welfare state (payroll taxes that act as a disincentive to hiring) and the political consequences of an exceedingly honorable policy that is protecting the poor more than the middle class and the workers were part of a process that led to a growing internal deficit when the promised world recovery failed to materialize.

Let me close on a terrible irony. If I am right, it was the external and internal deficit, more than any other factor, that undercut the commitment to a new kind of creative growth. But, we now know very well, there is one country that is free from such vulgar disciplinary measures of the free market: the United States of America. Our country has run up a balance of trade and internal deficit that makes the French look like abstemious Milton Friedmanites, and it has done so in the name of a free-enterprise ideology.

The paradox, then, is this: America is the only country in which the French socialist vision could have been put into practice. □

Lewis Coser Replies

Michael Harrington and I differ on nuances of interpretation while we agree on essentials. Let me deal with his three points seriatim.

(1) Yes, the "Socialist Project" adopted in 1980 is a fine document. The fact is, however, that it has not served as a guide to action for the Mitterrand regime, except perhaps in its honeymoon period right after the 1981 elections. I recently spent the better part of a year in Paris and saw a good number of writers, academicians, and journalists. Nobody, really nobody, alluded spontaneously to the Project in any conversation.

No major policy decision made in the last three years can be traced to the vision outlined in that Project.

To be sure, Mitterrand's left Keynesian poli-

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cies were largely wrecked by an entirely mistaken assessment of the international economic situation. I dealt with this in two previous articles and hence felt no need to refer to it again, except in a footnote. Yet even here it is no good to exonerate the government by pointing to circumstances beyond its reach. Mitterrand attempted to reflate the economy by putting new purchasing power into the hands of French consumers. This might have worked in a huge country like the United States, but it couldn't work in France. French private and corporate consumers, finding that products of other Common Market nations were cheaper, bought these rather than French goods, so that France's trade balance deteriorated rapidly and its foreign debts increased alarmingly. In sum, the "objective" circumstances were indeed most unpropitious, but "subjective" incompetence made things even worse.

(2) I fully agree with what Mike Harrington says about the free-enterprise illusions of much of the French intelligentsia. He supplements what I had to say on that count.

(3) Michel Roccard was right in suggesting that the government should have devalued at its inception. However, they did not do so precisely because they were not inspired by a vision but because, to quote Mike Harrington, they were "very conservative in international monetary matters." I am not convinced by Kolm's argument that a better monetary policy would have alleviated most problems. Major failures in economic policies rarely hinge on just one mistake. Mitterrand didn't just slip on a banana peel, his entire course proved to be disastrous. Mike Harrington's point that only in a vast country like ours would the Mitterrand policy have had a chance, is well taken. But to think that it could have worked in France is only an added piece of evidence to prove that technocratic megalomania rather than socialist convictions guided the Mitterrand regime almost from its inception. □

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Jean Bethke Elshtain

Politics and the Battered Woman

A Provocative Study of a Major Social Problem

The politics of the battered women's movement brings together a number of vital concerns: the role of the state in intimate relations, feminist analyses of male violence and power, and the ways political activists and professional "social service providers" variously define and intervene in social problems.

Male battering of women is now a public concern. More aptly, it has once again become a public concern. For there are cycles of attention just as there appears to be a rising and falling in the incidence of battering itself. The value of Susan Schechter's *Women and Male Violence* lies, first, in the fact that it is a detailed and useful, if celebratory, look at the battered women's movement and, second, that it raises questions for political thinking that Schechter, however, fails to develop or treat adequately.[1]

Schechter, who describes herself as a "social worker" turned "activist," wants to get the record down before it is recast by those who may not share her socialist/feminist commitments. She documents efforts on behalf of battered women that, since 1974, have resulted in "over 300 shelters, 48 state coalitions or service providers, a national grass-roots organization, and a multitude of social and legal reforms." She also vows to "topple theories of psychopathology and the intergenerational transmission of family violence, thereby refuting the notion that professionals who subscribe to such theories know more about battered women than feminist activists."

Schechter succeeds in the first of these aims. Of her 13 chapters, 8 burst with a profusion of detail as she traces the origins and growth, the trials, tribulations, and achievements of the movement. This part of her book is zestful political history. But her text falters badly when it comes to general arguments about state intervention in and explanations for wife battering. Schechter tends to round up the usual suspects and trot out the usual categories (patriarchy, capitalism, domination) that obfuscate as much as they illumine. Even so, her analysis is provocative. The reader who finds Schechter's explanatory framework thin is invited to think things through in some alternative manner.

Schechter estimates that approximately 2 million American women are battered annually. Others put the figures even higher—at between 3 and 4 million.[2] What do we make of this social fact? Schechter sees but two broad reactions to what she takes as a brute given of social life (or, at least, of "male-dominant, capitalist society"). The first is a prefeminist "socially induced silence" in which the entire system is geared to keeping violent families intact, enveloped in a shroud of privacy. The second is the emergence of a national battered women's movement ("Suddenly . . . desperately . . .").

The key to this shift from denial to eruption, she goes on, lies in the women's movement itself, specifically in the recognition that what happened between men and women "in the privacy of their home was deeply political." A

[1] Susan Schechter, *Women and Male Violence: The Visions and Struggles of the Battered Women's Movement*. Boston: South End Press, 1982.

[2] Evan Stark, Anne Flitcraft, and William Frazier set the figures at this higher level in "Medicine and Patriarchal Violence: The Social Construction of a 'Private' Event," *International Journal of Health Services* 9 (1979), 3:461–93.

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perspectival jolt, a grass-roots feminist response to victimization—and its very success, in turn, prompts professionals (social workers, funding agencies, government bureaucracies) to legitimate the effort, at the same time threatening to strip it of its original *raison d'être,* its participatory élan, and its way of creating political identity. (Schechter highlights tensions within the movement with admirable candor. Areas of disputation and discord grew up around race, sexual identity, children, and ideological cleavage.) This is the narrative that unfolds.

SOME FASCINATING QUESTIONS suggest themselves. How do social "realities" become political "problems"? Who identifies and names "problems" and to what ends? What categories are available to sustain the kinds of impulses to which the battered women's movement is a response? And what implications for democratic politics more generally can be drawn from this instance of single-issue, grass-roots organizing?

One persistent theme running through Schechter's text is the impact of the antiprofessional suspicions of the movement's founders—who marked a vast difference between their participatory politics and the politics of bureaucratic and paternalistic liberalism. Growing out of the heritage of the 1960s New Left, movement activists, initially nearly all middle-class and well-educated, were suspicious of political models revolving around a policy-making and -implementing elite and a subordinate group of dependent "clients." Movement spokeswomen perceived long-standing "professional arrogance and indifference toward battered women." This initial perception, and the radically participatory ethos of the early phase of the movement, set the stage for later struggles over the hiring of professional staff, assimilation of shelters to extant service networks, and the loss of autonomy that came with government funding.

In this matter of activists vs. professionals, Schechter rejects the provider/client model of social work and welfare—the language of "clients" and "cases." Although she fails to develop her criticism, one might point out how the battered women's movement sees those it serves very differently from descriptions cast in welfare "bureaucratese." A welfare "client" is construed as a consumer of services whose case is "managed" by a professional. But a victim of battering is seen by the movement as a woman who can reconstitute her identity in ways that will socially and politically "empower" her.

By helping the victim to place her individual suffering within a social and political framework, activists hope to set the stage for possible shifts in self-perception. A now empowered political person, who has overcome her victimization, can move to transform a situation that demeans and threatens her. A welfare "client," by contrast, is locked into a static dependency on agencies and experts, leaving little room for transformation. Although this by no means exhausts the complexities of the relationship between movement activists and battered women who use the shelters, it does raise an important question.

I would suggest the following interpretation as a way of understanding the difference, respectively, between the client/case worker and the activist/victim relationships. The feminist volunteer, who may be working up to 16 hours a day in a shelter, is "needed" by women who seek refuge from violence. But she also "needs" them. Their existence as victims points to the reason for her own commitment and simultaneously reinforces a perspective that construes men and families as violent, women as victimized, and so on.

The nuances here call to mind Jane Addams's essay "On the Subjective Necessity for Social Settlements," in which Addams traced the reciprocities linking educated, middle-class female reformers with undereducated, underclass immigrants. Addams understood that the solution to her own problems of self-identity and purpose lay in the creation of a movement that would connect her with others in complex ways. Although the reflective self-consciousness of an Addams is rare, then and now, the activist/victim nexus highlighted by the movement holds open the possibility for mutual self-revelation and change that is absent from the client/provider relation.

Schechter's work would have been richer had she developed an analysis of the tension between creating a sanctuary and constituting

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a political space; between protecting the vulnerable and binding up their wounds, on the one hand, and politicizing those same individuals in an avowedly feminist direction and sending them forth to challenge the status quo, on the other. Although she nods in the direction of these very demanding concerns, Schechter is frustratingly silent on several further implications of her brief against the professionalization of the movement.

Schechter's text can be read, for example, as an implicit rebuttal of the line of feminist thinking, now apparently in retreat, that derided an unpaid effort, blasting volunteerism as just another instance of female selflessness. *Women and Male Violence* indeed is a celebration of *feminist* volunteerism, highlighting more generally how our social life would be impoverished if such efforts dried up entirely, or were totally taken over by public policy and the market.

This analysis also invites a more developed critique of bureaucratic, welfare-state liberalism from a participatory and feminist perspective. Schechter shies away from this task in part because she sees the need for feminists to use the state instrumentally to protect women and punish men. But she regards such reliance as a mixed blessing, and she documents instances of the negative ways in which government agencies move in on movement terrain. She sees, for example, a "nightmare" in the New York City case in which city officials undermined the autonomy of shelter programs by "forcing each battered woman to be verified by a welfare center as eligible for shelter and by giving each shelter resident a two-party welfare check which must be turned over to the shelter to pay for the residents' food and rent. As a result, the shelter becomes like a landlord rather than a trusted friend. . . ."

Examples like this one justify movement suspicion of the state. But they ought to do more: they should put pressure on those socialist and feminist visions of a future that project more, and better, what we've got—a more thorough-going welfare system, more and wider-ranging social services, and so on. It is difficult in our political climate to oppose Reaganomics, yet to be critical, simultaneously, of many features of welfare-state liberalism; but that is a posture Schechter's evidence, if not her own analysis, reinforces.

II

Schechter's failure to draw out the implications of her densely packed narrative is not the most serious problem with *Women and Male Violence*. Schechter sets her theoretical sights very high: she wants to explain nothing less than the causes of and the solutions to male violence. But the way she frames the issue—"Why are men violent and what role does violence play in women's oppression?"—dehistoricizes and abstractly universalizes the issue. Schechter falls victim to a tendency to ignore variation between societies, to see in our patterns of gender identity and relation a universal given, and to obscure complex social determinations by construing male dominance as an immutable (or nearly so) feature of the human landscape.

Yet we know that the phenomenon of the battered woman is not a pregiven of social life. In Western industrial societies social historians have located cycles, periods of ebb and flow, in domestic violence. For example: Evan Stark, Anne Flitcraft, and William Frazier document the 1830s and '40s, the late 19th century, and the 1970s as three periods when battering was on the rise and various attempts were made to control it. Earlier social reformers saw the alternative to domestic violence in making women and children wards of the state. Since the 1890s, however, at least until the recent feminist wave, family reconciliation became the byword, coupled with temporary emergency housing outside the home. One way or another, the "permanent dependence of women and children on agency support" was guaranteed, though often without dissolving an ongoing connection to the violent spouse.

Such historic shifts fall through the grid of Schechter's analysis. For her, male domination, or patriarchy, constitutes a theoretical and political *bête noire:* all women vs. all men. Other institutions—economic, social, cultural, political—are reinforced by and in turn reinforce all forms of "exploitation, including class, ethnic, and religious ones." Her presumption of a universal condition with grand causal efficacy lacks subtlety and historical depth.

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The story, underscored by her theory, goes like this. Battering is a tool of male power and the self-conscious and purposeful outgrowth of that power. Hence battering is an integral part of women's oppression. Violence against women is rooted in "male domination" and/or "male-dominated capitalist society." Patriarchalism, historically, got intertwined "with the needs of capitalism," thus unambivalently reinforcing male violence. The family, in this scenario, is an arena in which male domination flourishes and violence is deployed *routinely* by the dominant. This is a potent doctrine, but it begs too many questions and obscures too many aspects of the problem of violence in general and violence against women in particular. A strong and supple theory should help to account for detail and complexity; in denying that complexity, Schechter evades a number of problems for political life and thought.

I SHALL BRING FORWARD four concrete questions concerning men, women, and violence in order to show how Schechter's theoretical structure fails as the basis for a provocative or compelling exploration.

(1) "As many as half the American women battered each year have no blood or legal ties to the men who assault them," write Stark, Flitcraft, and Frazier in "Medicine and Patriarchal Violence" (p. 484). This suggests that violence may well be a major symptom of familial breakups at a time of widespread social dislocation rather than a constant feature of secure relationships in stable settings. Perhaps we would come closer to understanding male violence against women if we explored the unraveling of "male authority" in diverse epochs, often linked to brutal vagaries in the political economy.

Schechter consistently speaks of violence against women "under capitalism," but she has no real analysis of how, through what social forces, and in what arenas and institutions capitalism requires or reinforces such violence. This is unfortunate because one might be able to make such a case, demonstrating how capitalism and liberalism historically have undermined the bases of traditional patriarchal authority.

Because Schechter assumes a simple unity between capitalism and patriarchy, she cannot get to first base with this part of the problem. If violence is not so much an expression of secure domination as a signifier of a fear of losing control or a desire to reassert it, the vulnerability of men to a stripping away of their dignity in periods of unemployment, for example, deepens our understanding of the inner tie between violence and economic forces. Hannah Arendt argues that violence appears "where power is in jeopardy"; indeed, she sees power and violence as opposites.[3] Whether one chooses to develop or challenge Arendt's claim, one must reject the simplistic assimilation of power to violence that Schechter offers.

(2) Schechter proclaims the family a social and political, not just a preciously private, institution. Few would deny that one cannot insulate the family from its wider social surroundings. But if we were to take this characterization seriously, we would have to underscore the privatizing tendencies of modern life that push toward insularity, atomism, and the breaking of long-term social connections. For battering appears "*only* when persons have been forcibly isolated from potentially supportive kin and peer relations and virtually locked into family situations. . . ."[4] This implies that we are not looking at an intrinsic feature of family life but at a likely or possible outcome of family privatization, given the breakdown of social constraints and supports for families. Stripped of ties to neighborhood, place, and a network of kin and friends, the isolated family becomes an emotional cauldron, a privatizing prison.

Schechter recognizes this when she proffers her solution to the problem of male violence (see below), but her theoretical schema affords little space for such awareness conceptually. Exploration of the decreased sociality of families might also help us to understand why the battered woman is three times more likely to be pregnant than the unbattered woman. This reminder ("in the family way") of familial

[3] Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1969), p. 56.

[4] Stark, Flitcraft, and Frazier, "Medicine and Patriarchal Violence," p. 480.

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responsibilities and constraints *in the absence of supportive structures* is, it seems, more likely to become one source of dismay, fear, loathing, and subsequent eruption.

(3) Why does violence occur in lesbian and gay relationships? Schechter admits that such violence exists, and she calls for more study of the problem. But her insistence that violence is the way men express and shore up their domination over women makes it difficult to understand instances of violence in nonheterosexual unions. This problem is now severe enough that specific shelters to handle it have been set up in several cities. Schechter closes off possible explanatory routes save for evoking "false consciousness," the mimicry by lesbians and gays of the patterns of heterosexual society. But in making this argument she reverts to a social learning theory she has rejected earlier as a possible explanation for male violence against women.

Taking another tack, and seeing violence not as the expression of secure domination but as an attempt to assert or gain control, or as signifying the fear of losing control, we can more readily make something intelligible of homosexual violence. There is a built-in uncertainty, by definition, in homosexual liaisons. The usual role expectations and unconsciously operating "checks and balances," the playing off of "rights" and "prerogatives," cannot be so easily wheeled into place. In a chilling way, rage that erupts into violence may aim for clarity on this question.

(4) How does one explain evidence that women attack and kill men "almost as frequently as they are attacked and killed" by men?[5] Schechter slides past the problem of female violence by asserting that many "women have no alternative but to kill a spouse" in self-defense. One senses an evasion here. If it is true that women, though the prime target of beatings, display a domestic homicide rate nearly as high as that of men, we confront some curious twists and turns in the tale.

Throughout her book, Schechter rejects the suggestion that there is any "equality" in abuse of the sort hinted at by such formulations as "spouse battering" or "spouse abuse." She is right to do so, given her project. That is, concentrating upon the reality of battering, she correctly detects a pattern of predominantly female victims and male victimizers. Women are not as "capable" as men of battering with fists and feet: here brute strength remains a major advantage. But women *are* "equal" when it comes to spouse killing, where weapons compensate for disparities of strength.

To see female violence as wholly "reactive," as Schechter does, is to perpetuate our "normal" cultural expectations in an interesting way. Society as a whole expects men to be more violent than women and anticipates that women will be the more likely victims of aggression. The possibility of male victimization and female aggression defies received presumptions and consequently is not reinforced by police, medical, legal, and mental-health structures. Well-established cultural paradigms are brought to bear to construct wife-battering as a social problem. This does not hold where the victimized party is male: it is more difficult, given our cultural lens, for us to "see" this problem, and Schechter's theoretical edifice disallows attending to it at all.

III

Finally, Schechter's proposed solutions to male violence against women are deeply infected by her acceptance of a reified vision of that violence. She proffers a double agenda: one for the "interim," before we have fully reconstructed our society's life, and a second for sustaining that reconstruction. She praises what so far, in her view, has been accomplished by women who worked, for example, to overturn the need for corroborative evidence in rape cases, finding in such efforts a good beginning toward reform of the criminal justice system. To her credit, she alerts us to possible racist use of the rape charge, but she offers no way of instilling that awareness in the law.

Schechter goes on to endorse old laws against wife-beating and to urge creation of new ones. We must, as part of the interim strategy, expand the arrest powers of the police and strip the courts of their "sexist blinders," so that they see women as a special legal category requiring special protections. (There

[5] Ibid., p. 479.

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is something of a paradox here. At a time when many feminists are challenging the whole concept of "protection," Schechter proposes a sweeping reaffirmation of the notion.) Although she observes that expanded "discretionary powers of arrest" may give rise to new abuse of the poor and Third World peoples, she is prepared to take that chance even as she sounds the alarm.

Matters get muddled as Schechter describes a potpourri of proposals offered by "other feminists" and "most activists." It is unclear where she stands with reference, say, to advocacy of "mandated counseling" to condition the behavior of violent men or of "court-mandated, antisexist counseling and education programs" coupled with compulsory punishment for second offenses.

Schechter's frequently off-hand notice of possible civil rights concerns in matters of behavior modification is troubling. I agree that "solutions are hard to find," but this difficulty should not justify a refusal to think about the abuses inherent in extending therapeutic powers and responsibilities to the state as part of its policing function.

I cannot enter here upon a full critique of the concept of "reeducation." But let me just mention Arendt's brief attack on those who call upon science to manipulate and control our "instincts" in the interest of social amity. Arendt reminds us that violence may sometimes be a remedy to particular, dire situations (her example is Billy Budd), but, and more important, that our capacity for rage and violence is part of a complex repertoire of "*human* emotions, and to cure man of them would mean nothing less than to dehumanize or emasculate him."[6]

While Schechter's interim program relies heavily on a state's policing apparatus she otherwise condemns or suspects, her *solution* to the problem of ending violence against women once and for all requires "a total restructuring of society that is feminist, antiracist, and socialist." It is unclear whether, in her view, such a society would be democratic or whether, indeed, there would be any politics at all. Presumably some sort of state apparatus must be on hand to plan the economy, redistribute resources, and so on (given her commitment to socialism), but this is not spelled out. In Schechter's new society,

> family life would be open for community scrutiny because the family would be part of and accountable to the community. Community-based institutions could hear complaints and dispense justice, and community networks could hold individuals accountable for their behavior and offer protection to women. If a false separation did not exist between the family and the community, women might lose their sense of isolation and gain a sense of entitlement to a violence-free life.

Schechter goes no further in specifying how this robust communitarian world—a future perfect *Gemeinschaft*—is to be generated out of a Hobbesian battlefield. Because she assumes that "total restructuring" will produce a moral consensus, she skirts problems of coercion and control otherwise implicit in the plan for hearing complaints and "dispensing" justice. With every aspect of life opened up for community inspection, she prescribes a world I find singularly unattractive. At least in traditional communities there was room for backsliders, town drunks, loners, dreamers, and harmless eccentrics. In Schechter's society of scrutiny, total accountability and instant justice, the social space for difference, indifference, dissent, and refusal is squeezed out. This is the way matters stand unless or until Schechter, and the many feminists who share her theoretical presumptions, tell us how the future community of scrutiny will preserve any freedom worthy of the name.

I DOUBT whether Schechter has really considered the implications of her argument. Just 30 pages after her paean to the intrusive communities of the reconstructed future, for example, she states unequivocally that "whom women choose as emotional and sexual partners cannot be open for public scrutiny"—an embrace of the public/private distinction and the possibility for concealment at odds with her image of the new society. There seem to be some loose theoretical threads dangling here.

At long last, however, after theoretical critique and political challenge, it is well to be

[6] Arendt, *On Violence*, p. 64.

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reminded of the horrible fact with which Schechter begins—that millions of women are being beaten in this society at this time. Underneath the statistics are human realities that evoke pity and terror. Schechter quotes an account by an activist that portrays the extreme isolation of many rural women and the additional problem this poses in cases of battering and abuse. "Recently in Nebraska," the account relates, "a woman tried to walk to a shelter for battered women that she had heard about. It was 150 miles from her home. She had walked nearly halfway with her small children on back roads when she came to a town that had a volunteer task force on domestic violence, which arranged for her transportation. . . ."

A movement that aims to give "women back their lives and dignity" may not warrant the "unequivocal praise" Schechter calls for, but it deserves both praise and recognition from all those concerned with the creation of political space, the development of participatory capacities, and fundamental human decency. □

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Luke Lea

A Communitarian Prospect

Part-Time Factory Jobs in the Country

Where in the United States can we point to even a single well-planned communitarian experiment that has the virtues of being plural, open, secular, and democratic?

When I survey the vast urban-industrial wasteland of contemporary America, I often ask myself this question. That its dominant corporate institutions show few signs of being radically transformed only adds to the bafflement. Does it mean that the idealistic young of the next generation will have nothing better to look forward to than 40 years in the suburbs? Must they be content, all but a lucky few, to pass their days at boring jobs in offices, factories, and fast-food franchises, and their evenings in front of the TV, watching sit-coms and action adventures? And will it continue to be true—as it is now by default—that practically the only way searching youth can escape from mass society, and find a fraternity of purpose within it, is to surrender their minds and dignity to a cult?

The irony is that from a technical standpoint the possibilities have never been more interesting. Owing to developments in transport and communications and, yes, in computers (the list includes everything from the new satellite telecommunications to the interstate highways and the 18-wheel truck), we're now in a position to try new industrial arrangements that even a generation ago would have been judged hopelessly impractical. A growing economy has more than doubled the productivity and real wages of workers since the end of World War II, even if the rate of productivity growth has recently slowed. A life that combines a measure of both leisure and affluence would seem closer than before. Yet discounting the druggy, uncapitalized hippie communes of the 1960s, we have to go back half a century—to the Great Depression and the Resettlement Administration—to find any significant experimentation in this area. Isn't this a field for youthful, idealistic endeavor?

Here I want to propose a line of development—a set of possibilities—that lies near the frontier of feasibility. It runs in a direction that should appeal to the pioneering spirit of young people eager to explore the potentials of living and working in the post-industrial economy. Yet it isn't the most radical proposition imaginable, if only because it honors that American penchant for private property in household and homestead—in my judgment, the rock on which experiments of this kind are most likely to founder. The Israeli Moshav with its cooperative production and individualized—or rather, familialized—consumption is a closer model than the better-known Kibbutz, with its collectivization of production and consumption. But my proposal differs from the Moshav in important ways. I've freely drawn on the communitarian tradition that includes, in addition to the Israeli examples, the writings of Paul and Percival Goodman, the work of the Resettlement Administration, the English Garden City movement, Kropotkin's *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, and that runs back eventually to Owen and Fourier.

II

Let's consider the possibility of part-time jobs in the country; or, rather, the possibility of factories in the countryside run on a system of part-time employment. Under this novel arrangement men and women would work part-time in rural factories, and in their free time would build their own houses, cultivate gar-

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dens, pursue hobbies, arts and crafts, and other outside interests. What we really want to look at is the kind of community that might develop around an economic base of factories in the countryside run on part-time jobs.

By "part-time jobs" I mean jobs that would be essentially half-time or less. The shifts might run five four-hour days a week, three six-hour days a week, or even three days a week four hours a day, or some combination. (The factories could run full-time, of course, and with computers to do the payroll, the extra paper work would be inconsequential.) The idea is for the workers to cut the hours they work in factories to a bare minimum, and then to use the money they earn, together with their leisure, to purchase tools and supplies and undertake a variety of other useful, humanly satisfying activities such as home-building, gardening, cooking, and so forth. What we're looking at is the possibility of a compromise—a trade-off, really—between the age-old longing for the simple life and the technological imperatives of modern society.

The rationale is straightforward. The techniques of mass production are here to stay; our living standards depend on them. But the core of these techniques—standardization, specialization, and a far-reaching division of labor—has a stultifying effect on working life. Most office and factory jobs are inherently boring, no matter how the work is organized. These facts hold true whether we're talking about a capitalist or a socialist economy.

On the other hand, certain areas of the economy have stubbornly resisted the techniques of mass production or else have yielded to them with inferior results. Home-building is one example. The growth and preparation of food (except cereal grains and crops such as soybeans) is another. The care of children is a third. It happens that these activities give the greatest intrinsic rewards to those who do them directly, for themselves. They satisfy what Veblen called the instinct for workmanship.

So why not take advantage of these facts by dividing the economy in two? One half—the industrial half—would remain thoroughly modern and efficient. It could produce the TV sets, calculators, textiles, copper tubing, electric light bulbs, tooth brushes, refrigerators, zippers, books, gasoline engines, and the thousands of other manufactured items we've come to expect. The other half—the informal half—would be under the individual's personal control or that of family, friends, and neighbors. It's here that the houses would get built, the gardens planted, the food cooked, the children (and, later on, the old people) cared for. Within this sphere the worker would regain control of his or her tools and materials. The worker would pull back from that "abdication of competency" Paul Goodman once wrote about and instead would create a more convivial world of work, a place where the alienating circumstances of modern mass production would no longer hold sway.

All sorts of interesting possibilities suggest themselves when we start to imagine the kind of community that might develop around such factories. And while the community itself must be the final arbiter as to what would be best for it, here are some to consider:

Sexual Equality • Couples starting out could experiment with building true equality into the new household economy. With both partners working only part-time outside the home and making equal contributions to the household finance, there's no excuse for the woman getting stuck with most of the cooking, cleaning, and washing. Instead, a new division of household responsibilities could be worked out. This might be facilitated by the fact that there would be many more tasks than at present that need doing around the house, including many traditionally thought of as "man's work." Carpentry, plumbing, and electrical work, heavy digging in the garden, and keeping all the major household appliances in good repair are just a few examples. All this would require a new competency. Men, for example, must learn the basic skills of cooking if these are to become habits in later life (more on this below).

Child Care • With both parents free to spend a good part of each day at home if necessary, a little schedule-juggling could eliminate the need for professional day-care centers. The parents could share responsibility for child care and once more make the home into a place of

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nurture and support. A by-product of this new emphasis is that children would be exposed to the grown-up world of work much more than now. They would see their parents and neighbors as adults to emulate rather than people who disappear every day to go to their job.

Taking it a step further, the community might wish to institutionalize this arrangement in the formal educational system (that, in any case, tends to mirror the society in which it exists). Students might attend classes half a day and spend the other half apprenticed in a variety of arts and crafts—industrial, domestic, as well as in fine arts and crafts. Not only would this enrich the community's human resources and prepare students for the sort of lives they might be expected to lead. For overworked teachers it would mean an "out" from the impossible task of trying to instruct upward of 150 pupils (roughly, five classes of 30 students each) a day. Parents could regularly assist in the schools. The result might be superior education all the way around.

Neighborhood Co-ops • With half the new economy centered around home and garden, families living close together might pool their resources and take advantage of the opportunities cooperation allows. They might purchase a communal tractor to plow up their garden plots in the spring. A series of small neighborhood shops for wood- and metal-working, ceramics, and auto repairs might be organized. A laundromat makes sense too, not only because it saves money but because it would provide a convenient spot to meet and chat. Minor institutions of this sort could knit families and neighbors together—a far cry from the isolation we find in most urban neighborhoods today.

Town Planning • Some of the most interesting possibilities emerge out of the ways the community might organize its land. For example, to avoid commercial squalor, poor planning, and corruption, which often go along with private real-estate speculation, all income-producing property might be placed in trust to the community as a whole, which then would lease it to the final users. For residential holdings—the land on which people actually live—a condominium arrangement might be worked out under which each family could buy its own plot, and this plot would constitute a voting "share" in a neighborhood corporation that manages these holdings as a whole. A provision could be made limiting each family to one plot, to prevent landlordism and empire-building. Families wishing to leave the community, or to move from one place to another within it, would be free to sell their plots (though a sale might need the approval of the community board or council).

With these legal arrangements—or others of a similar intent—the community would be able to demonstrate the superiority of planning over the market in the tasteful and rational development of a site. For example, each neighborhood unit might include a common green around which the houses would be grouped: a place for children to play and for adults to congregate. In the layout of the community as a whole, care could be taken to achieve greater compactness of design, with shorter distances between work and home and the places where people shop. The community could plan for the use of slower, less expensive cars and greater use of feet, bicycles, and buses, and found country stores and home-delivery systems. At its center the major public and commercial buildings—the biggest stores, the town meeting hall, library, movie house, and so on—could be grouped in a landscaped parklike mall.

Health Maintenance • To help contain the cost of medical care and insure universal coverage, the community might organize its own health-maintenance organization to which all its members would subscribe. A community clinic with its own salaried staff could be outfitted to handle all but the most serious cases. For these a special supplemental arrangement might be worked out with the nearest regional hospital: a prepaid group major-medical plan for the community as a whole.

Self-government • The community could experiment with new ways of bringing democracy to local government. For example, the often discussed but seldom tried possibilities of two-way cable TV might be explored. Town meetings could be televised and, for the most important decisions, special referenda held. The people at home would be free to listen or, if the

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discussion failed to interest them, get up and walk away. Then at a certain prescheduled time debate would end and the vote be taken. In this way tyranny by committee and filibuster would be reduced, and ordinary citizens could play a more active role in local affairs.

Guaranteed Employment • The community might guarantee every member a paying job by agreeing to share out the available work. During a downturn in the economy, for instance, instead of 10 percent of the work force being laid off completely and the other 90 percent continuing to work as before, all could take a 10 percent cut in hours and shift around the still-existing jobs in a way that would include everyone. This would require a social contract among all the members of the community—and also between the community and its employers. But the gains in security and morale, to say nothing of fairness, would more than offset any minor inconvenience or sacrifice of efficiency.

III

Now what about the employers? Who's going to supply the capital to finance a factory in the countryside run on part-time jobs? And supposing the capital can be found, what are to be the relations between the factory and the community around it?

Clearly, the community members themselves will not be able to supply the funds. The average job in manufacturing today requires an initial investment in excess of $50,000 to make it productive. Then, too, the future colonists will face problems of financing the purchase of land and housing and at least the rudiments of an infrastructure. So unless we limit applicants to heirs of substantial family legacies, outside help will be essential.

There are several possibilities, but before we look at them I want to emphasize an important point. *Part-time labor has the potential, at least theoretically, of being more efficient than comparable full-time labor.* There are a couple of reasons for this. One is that workers can work faster (more efficiently) for shorter periods of time than for longer ones—just as in track-and-field the short-distance runners always run faster than the long-distance runners. Provided wages are tied to output with a proper incentive (and a proper incentive here must mean, finally, profit-sharing), we should see a gain in output per work hour.

A second point is that under the arrangement I'm proposing it's likely that the workers will be working, if anything, slightly fewer hours in the week than would be their preference. So naturally they'll be eager to earn every penny they can. Consequently, not only will they work harder—with incentives—but there should be less tardiness, absenteeism, and time-wasting than in a plant employing full-time workers.

For confirmation of these points, look to the performance of United Parcel Service, a successful company that has pioneered in the large-scale use of part-time labor. Some of their sorting sheds are in rural areas staffed by farm women working three to five hours a day. Wages are well above the national average—over $12 an hour (they're organized by the Teamsters, and use a group piece-rate system)—and still these are UPS's most productive and labor-efficient operations. (I have researched the UPS conditions and verified this information through personal interviews with UPS managers throughout the country.) So incentive-based work sprints are a way of boosting labor's productivity. Out of this increased productivity can be financed not only a higher wage rate but also a higher rate of return on the capital invested. Short shifts may be the most efficient way to organize the low-skill, routine jobs in a factory.

ARMED WITH THIS ARGUMENT, we have at least three sources for obtaining the necessary capital funds to underwrite a pilot project: (1) individual subscriptions; (2) private industrialists; (3) liberal corporations.

• Individual subscriptions were essentially the means by which the first Kibbutz in Palestine—Deganiah—was financed near the turn of the century (in 1909). The then recently formed World Zionist Organization, which obtained its money from private donors, purchased a farm on Lake Kinnereth in the Jordan Valley and leased it for a year to a group of young Zionist pioneers. The arrangement was

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essentially one of profit-sharing: to the Kibbutz community went a minimum wage for the workers, plus half of the proceeds of the operation. Against nearly everyone's expectations, the experiment proved a financial success and socially viable. It was indeed an important pilot: the start of the Kibbutz movement. (See Eliyahu Kanovsky, *The Economy of the Israeli Kibbutz*, Harvard University Press, 1966, p. 16.)

Adapting this approach, we might try to assemble a group of wealthy liberal donors who would agree to purchase shares in a small factory. A bicycle factory, an agricultural processing plant, or a mail-order operation like L. L. Bean's are possibilities. To assure some professional competence, a full-time trained manager could be hired—preferably someone agreeable both to the shareholders and the workers. The payment system could be based on the same principle as that at Deganiah: a minimum wage plus a fixed share of the net proceeds, the precise share to be determined by the relative amounts of labor and capital employed. With a computer to keep the books, it should be possible to make the necessary calculations speedily, on a quarterly or even monthly basis. Finally, to insure the system's integrity—and thus the workers' confidence in it—the books of the enterprise should be open to the workers or their representatives.

Such an approach would give maximum flexibility to the experiment. The workers would have a great sense of responsibility and could assume an active role in day-to-day management. The rudiments of workplace democracy might evolve and various innovative arrangements—ways to cut waste, improve efficiency, and so on—could be devised. The experiment, of course, might fail for reasons that have nothing to do with the merits of its animating concept. Either through mismanagement, bad luck, a poor market, inexperience, lack of capital—all hazards in starting a new business from scratch—the venture might go awry. These risks might be reduced, however, by buying an already going concern.

• A more conventional approach would be to interest a private industrialist in building the factory. Not every factory owner is a money-grubbing s.o.b. obsessed with the bottom line. Friedrich Engels and Robert Owen both owned factories, and in our time the brothers Green (who founded the Lincoln Electric Co.) and Sidney Harmon stand out as examples of enlightened ownership. Others might turn up.

The advantages and disadvantages of this option are nearly the reverse of the first. On the plus side, there would be a greater likelihood that the factory could make a go of it. Producing an established product, with a proven or even expanding demand (a new branch plant to meet a growing market for a particular brand item would be ideal), the community would not have to worry so much about selling what it makes. Instead, its attention could be focused on the manufacturing process. Then, too, the manufacturer would be experienced and knowledgeable in regard to the product's manufacture and marketing. On the minus side, in all likelihood there would be less flexibility to try new ways. A more traditional relationship between labor and capital would probably prevail, at least initially. And there is always the chance that the factory owner might try to take unfair advantage to exploit what is, essentially, a captive work force (I will return to this problem).

• The possibility of finding a liberal corporate sponsor is perhaps a will-o'-the-wisp. Corporations aren't noted for their zeal in experimenting with new industrial arrangements. A few may sponsor progressive programming on public television, but as a rule such liberal leanings stop abruptly at the factory gate. Yet we cannot ignore the fact that large corporations control the lion's share of our manufacturing capacity. There's just a chance that a chief executive officer somewhere might be persuaded to underwrite our experiment. If so, we can be sure that his motives will be complex, since neither profits alone nor public relations would be enough to justify the decision. But the two together might do the trick. When many large organizations are under fire for ignoring the human impact of their policies, they might want to set an example or two showing an effort of finding new ways to improve the work experience. At the same time corporations are under enormous pressure to increase the effi-

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ciency of their labor force, both in order to meet foreign competition and to avoid costly new outlays in equipment.

Now suppose we present our concept to the corporations as a strategy for achieving both of these ends at once? That is, incentive-based work sprints are a way of increasing productivity and of suiting the workers' jobs more to their needs. We might stress the potential of this arrangement in other contexts too. Over half the farm families in America, for instance, now depend on money earned by outside employment in order to stay on their farms. Part-time jobs in the country would be a boon for these marginal farm families, and the companies would find them a well-motivated source of part-time labor.

The advantages of having a corporation sponsor the experiment are basically the same as having a private industrialist, except that the venture might be better financed. The disadvantages would also be similar, but made worse by the fact that the community would be dealing with a bureaucracy and couldn't very well enjoy the same personal access to the top. Of the three possible sources of capital funding, this is probably the least attractive.

WHOEVER the ultimate investors and employers might be, it seems certain that the community must take steps to guard against the dangers of becoming a company town. Being in a rural location, dependent upon just one or at best a few primary sources of employment, and with possibly no nearby alternatives, the community would be foolish to entrust its well-being to the good faith of its employers. This holds even under the first option outlined above and certainly under the second and third.

The most urgent need would be a union to bargain collectively with the employers. Without a union, there's little hope that the community can protect its rights and interests. Considering its unusually exposed situation, the community might take other steps as well to enhance its bargaining position. One would be an agreement with the employers not to pull their plant out of the community without prior notice and some form of compensation in case no replacement could be found (since to withdraw unilaterally would leave the community, with all of its property, stranded). A companion agreement might give the community exclusive rights to work in the factory, by barring the importation of strike-breakers during a breakdown in negotiations. Finally, taking advantage of its rural location, the community might take steps to attach to itself enough agricultural land—either in small family holdings or in larger farms operated by the community—to provide it with an independent food supply in the event of a strike.

The aim is to avoid a one-way dependency by a mere balance of power between labor and capital—but to build, rather, one between land and labor joined together, on the one side, versus capital on the other. This would encourage a mutually responsible relationship. For while the community would be in a strong bargaining position vis-à-vis its employers—with well-defined strike powers backed by the land—unreasonable demands could be met by a temporary shut-down of the plant, which would leave the community without its source of outside income. Whether employers would actually go for such an arrangement depends almost entirely, I think, on whether their profits gained by the incentive-based work sprints would outweigh the loss of control. If profits are the main desideratum, it's quite conceivable that they could. In any case, this is one of the things we ought to find out.

IV

So where do we go from here? How does one actually launch such an experiment? It's clear, to begin with, that even a small-scale pilot will need some sort of organization behind it. Projects like this don't happen of themselves. They require an agency that can bring the prospective participants together and coordinate a series of actions between conception and realization. What is needed is an institution to perform, in a more modest way, the functions of the World Zionist Organization in sponsoring Kibbutz Deganiah. Since their interests should be the first priority, perhaps an association made up of the future homesteader-colonists would be the most appropriate body.

So let's contemplate the possibility—I'm not sure how one gets something like this started—of a U.S. homesteaders' association. It doesn't

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have to be a very large organization; just a few chapters of a dozen members each. Chaim Weizmann in his memoirs noted that the parliamentary form of the World Zionist Organization helped to throw up a highly qualified leadership for that cause, so perhaps a similar form could be adopted here.

The headquarters of the association should, among other things, serve as a central clearinghouse for information about the project. It should also be responsible for finding investors and for developing a sound financial strategy. The local chapters would be primarily responsible for training. If an experiment like this is to succeed, it's essential that the future colonists learn some basic homesteading skills before they get started, particularly in construction and horticulture. Even among those attracted by the life style, not everyone has the required stamina, patience, and aptitudes. For urban middle-class youth in particular, the spirit may be willing but the flesh often weak. Imagine, then, small groups of a dozen or so people meeting for a few hours each week to teach themselves these skills. The army and navy produce excellent training films on how to do frame construction. These films might be used, and small backyard workshops held, to teach people these skills. If possible, this should be done under the supervision of persons who've already acquired building-trade skills (and, the woods of Vermont are full of them, would-be homesteaders who were motivated in the '60s). Similar workshops can be held in gardening, cooking, and other wanted skills.

It's also crucial that individual members start saving money for a down payment on the land and the purchase of enough building materials to get roofs over their heads. Not only will this insure their seriousness; it gives them a stake in the outcome. Realism tells us it could be a couple of years, or more, of planning and preparing before anything concrete could start to happen. This period should be used by the prospective homesteaders to prepare themselves financially and practically for what lies ahead. And the comradeship that might develop during this interval would be invaluable, both in itself and in case the group decides to "go in" together to form a neighborhood unit.

Our American society has long been noted for its organizational and practical flair. Surely, there are progressive elements within it today that are capable of seeing such a project to fruition. The goal—an experiment showing it's possible to have a socially balanced economy that honors and respects the whole man and the whole woman—is as old as the means are new. Let's make a start and see what we can do. □

To Our Contributors:

A few suggestions:

(1) Be sure to keep a copy of your ms—the mails aren't always reliable. And please remember that we can't return articles unless they're accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

(2) Please don't write to ask whether we're interested in such and such an article—it makes for useless correspondence. Look at our last few issues to see if your idea fits in. Or take a chance and send us your article.

(3) Type your ms *double-spaced*, with *wide* margins. Check all your figures, dates, names, etc.—they're the author's responsibility.

(4) Notes and footnotes should also be typed double-spaced, on a *separate* sheet. As we're not an academic journal, we prefer that they, wherever possible, be dropped altogether or worked into the text.

(5) We're usually quick in giving editorial decisions. If there's a delay, it's because a few editors are reading your article.

(6) Please bear with us—we have accumulated quite a backlog of material, and you may have to wait for a few issues before you see your article in print. □

THE EDITORS □

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Anne Phillips

Images of Fraternity

Socialist Slogans, Feminist Values

In the gloom of present-day politics, socialists may well lose themselves in nostalgic dreams of fraternity. We feel hemmed in by a world of self-interest, and we experience the daily weakening of those bonds of class and community that gave the socialist movement so much of its strength. The world we now inhabit seems markedly individualistic; we cast around in trepidation for some surviving signs of collective feeling. We talk forlornly of the old back-to-backs [row houses] with their bustling street life, compare them wistfully with the anonymous high-rise tower blocks of today. We recall the mining communities where workers shared their poverty and danger, then shudder at the new towns with their semidetacheds and their holidays in Spain. We have, perhaps, fond memories of the extended family where each generation played its role, and we shake our heads at its nuclear substitute with granny condemned to an old people's home. Self-help, self-interest, self-protection, these seem the catchwords of today. Fraternity, solidarity, even cooperation look sadly out of place.

Socialists do their best to resist nostalgia, but even the strongest will quail before such images. Socialism has always invoked some vision of community and usually frowned on unrestrained individualism. The ideal has been solidarity rather than division, working together rather than alone, collective rather than individual action. Partly this is no more than efficiency: to change the world we need the weight of numbers; to end poverty we need the power of socialized production. But for most of us there is a positive as well as pragmatic side. The "social" in socialism has always had at least two senses. Socialists believe in coordination, arguing that conscious planning will serve us better than unregulated competition. But we also value the very process of working together, tending to the view that this is a good in itself.

Thus it has long been a complaint against capitalism that it turns what should be social into an individual affair. The mechanics of the market put a barrier between us, leaving little space for cooperation or concern. Builders, to take one example, are paid to build—and whether they erect houses for the homeless or yet another office block is no concern of theirs. Engineers are employed to drive the trains on time—and whom or what they carry has nothing to do with them. Capitalism encourages us to keep ourselves to ourselves, to do the job, take the money, then spend it as we will. It does not promote a caring society, and reserves its greatest praise for those who "go it alone."

Socialists have challenged such individualism, and this is one of the points at which we diverge from classical liberals. Socialists would never define their objectives solely in terms of liberty and equality: the finest liberty and most scrupulous equality would still be inadequate if they left us isolated and alone. Social ownership, socialized production, even socialized consumption are regarded as positive goals. A socialist society would be one in which we developed our common concerns; the move-

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ment to create such a society would be one of cooperation.

So large units of production have been favored over smaller ones, and not just because of economies of scale. Communal child care has been favored over caring for children exclusively at home, and not merely because it means less of a drain on the energies of parents. Mass meetings have been favored over ballot boxes, and not only because they give greater weight to the opinions of activists. In all these cases there is a powerful belief that more social means better. As a skeptic might put it, socialists prefer to share their cake in a dingy canteen rather than divide it into equal pieces for each to eat at home.

This aspect of the tradition has been attacked as illiberal and oppressive, and socialists differ over how much importance to attach to it. But wherever each of us draws the line—between the public and the private, the social and the individual—there can be no doubt that the tradition as a whole values the social. It is because of this that we experiment with collective living, and exhibit such a marked propensity for going to meetings. We worry (perhaps more than we should) over our privatizing tendencies. We are inspired (much less often than we would like) by public demonstrations of solidarity. Every one of us will have some emotional memory of collective action, or some evocative dream of future unity. For many the formative experience was on demonstrations, rallies, or picket lines: we remember the confidence we gained from marching with thousands of others; the thrill of counting union banners from every trade and region. Socialism draws much of its intensity from such experiences, and the suggestion that these are passing will arouse deep concern.

I share this concern, but I also worry that it can make us uncritical of what went before. Those who mourn the lost community are often on shaky ground, with an overromantic view of the past and unnecessarily bleak picture of the present. The mining communities were, after all, never typical of working-class existence; the back-to-back terraces contained all the frustrations of poverty as well as the comforts of belonging; on numerous criteria (the proportion of old people in institutions, the number of young people who leave their hometown in search of work) communities are now *more* stable and caring than they used to be.

As far as fraternity itself is concerned, we should surely start with the admission that solidarity is not socialist in all its forms, that there are versions of it that repel as well as ones that attract. When we hear talk of the old boys' network, or the clannishness of the old school tie, we do not (I hope) thrill to these exhibitions of community spirit. Solidarity can divide as well as unite, and some of what we have lost we should be glad to leave behind.

Fraternity in particular has a richly archaic ring, and I want to argue we should leave it that way. Trade unionists, we know, are still brothers and send fraternal greetings, but now that one [English] trade unionist in three is a woman such language has come increasingly under fire. Our ears are now more finely tuned to the tensions of sexual division, and when the longing for unity is expressed in terms of men, it begins to strike a discordant note. However grand the "brotherhood of man" once sounded, today it is out of date.

I want to reassess in this essay the tradition of fraternity, arguing against any simple strategy of rehabilitation. As a model of solidarity it is flawed and partial, celebrating the unity of men and exclusion of women. As a basis for future action it is increasingly anachronistic, ignoring major changes that have occurred in the composition of the labor force. Crucial as the problem of solidarity is for socialists, we must first acknowledge the defects in our previous traditions, then see what alternatives we can develop.

When "liberty, equality, fraternity" was proclaimed in 1789, fraternity was already stamped by an earlier history. Family imagery was a recurrent feature of feudal life, in France as elsewhere in Europe, and in the centuries before the revolution, brotherhood was the other side of the more authoritarian patriarchy. Craft masters claimed their authority from their role as "fathers"; when pressed to explain themselves, kings tended to play the same card. Patriarchy was the dominant model for authority, and fraternity was its (largely uncritical)

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complement. Trades and professions typically organized themselves into corporations or confraternities; monks were brothers; so too were Freemasons, who flourished in 18th-century France.

This kind of fraternity had both its positive and negative aspects. When journeymen formed illicit brotherhoods, they were in some ways prefiguring the later trade unions: the brotherhoods found jobs for their members, arranged accommodation for journeymen on their weary trek around the country, and even put pressure on masters who tried to cut wages or worsen conditions. More impressive still, they brought together journeymen from a variety of trades, spanning the closely guarded boundaries of the medieval world. But against these progressive aspects, they generated an intense division between one brotherhood and another. When journeymen swore loyalty to their fellow "brothers," they were also swearing hostility to those outside, and rival *compagnonnages* (brotherhoods) were often at each other's throats.

As a model for socialist solidarity, such a hectic fraternity left much to be desired. The unity was premised on exclusion and, even more worrying from my point of view, it was a unity derived from a womanless world. The life of a journeyman was that of a single man, who roamed from town to town in pursuit of his trade. Women could appear in this world in the guise of "mothers"—and indeed the women who ran the *compagnons'* boarding houses were usually addressed as such. There was, however, no room for them as sisters. A young woman was no comrade, but rather the prize the journeyman might seek at the end of his travels. Getting a wife was both proof of success (who but a master could afford to marry) and guarantee of future prosperity (how else would you find the sons to work in your workshop). But while you were still a journeyman, women were largely out of bounds. Hence the brotherhood functioned as a community for single males; the bond that drew them together was their shared experience as *men.*

When the revolutionaries raised their cry of "fraternity" they thought to distance themselves from the closed world of feudal France —but traditions have a nasty habit of reasserting themselves. On the face of it, the revolution pursued a new ideal, one closer to that of Rousseau. Instead of the old complex of brotherhoods and guilds, there would be a new community where individuals united as citizens, with no subgroupings to deflect their common interest. Particularism and exclusivity were anathema to these revolutionaries; they wanted a fraternity of all brothers in a single nation.

This produced its contorted moments. In 1791, for example, the market women of Les Halles donated funds from their corporation (or guild) to the national treasury, and they were thanked by the president of the Assembly in the following terms:

> Mesdames:
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> It is not one of the lesser benefits of the Constitution to have destroyed the spirit of individual corporations, so as to make of all Frenchmen only a family of brothers closely united by the indissoluble and sacred bond of Fatherland. In consecrating today to the public cause what previously had been only a symbol of union between a few individuals, you give a new proof of [that] patriotism which had distinguished you since the beginning of the Revolution.[1]

Note how the "spirit of individual corporations" and the "unions between a few individuals" are now dismissed with scorn. But note too that what replaced these remnants was a fraternity of *men.* With all their determined universalism, the revolutionaries overlooked their sisters: in this case, not so much overlooked them, but even thanked them for their services to the family of man! Did no one note this oddity? Was no voice raised to suggest that fraternity is far from universal when it defines itself as a brotherhood of men?

On this occasion we can hardly plead historical naiveté, since the revolutionaries were indeed informed of the universal implications of brotherhood. In 1794, for example, they were forced to recognize that if all men are brothers, it is nonsense for some men to be slaves. In a remarkable moment of revolutionary fervor,

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[1] D. G. Levy, H. B. Applewhite, M. D. Johnson, eds., *Women in Revolutionary Paris, 1789–1795* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1979), p. 54.

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the National Convention declared that the aristocracy of skin was as abhorrent as the aristocracy of birth, welcomed three delegates from San Domingo (including one ex-slave), and announced that slavery was henceforth abolished in the French West Indies. Admittedly, it had taken the revolutionaries some years to reach this conclusion and when they did, it was with a cynical eye to the chances of mobilizing ex-slaves to defend their territories against Spanish or British invasion. But they did at least draw the necessary implication. If fraternity was to mean anything, it must extend to all men.

Women were not slow to make similar points for themselves. Olympe de Gouges was one of those to speak out against racism, arguing that fraternity must challenge the despotism of color. She also wrote in 1791 a Declaration of the Rights of Woman. Rewriting the constitution to read "woman" instead of "man," she pointed up the irony of a declaration that proclaimed the freedom of men and remained silent on the slavery of women. Women, she suggested, should qualify for every duty and every privilege now claimed by the men: they had the "right to mount the scaffold" and should be allowed the equal right to "mount the rostrum." As it was, she argued, the revolution had legitimized inequality. "Enslaved man" had freed himself, but "having become free, he has become unjust to his companion."[2]

Olympe de Gouges was a minority voice, and her complaints could be discredited as those of an antirevolutionary. Her Declaration took the form of an appeal to the queen (in the much mistaken belief that Marie Antoinette could be persuaded to speak in the name of all women), and in 1793 she was executed as a royalist sympathizer. But there were other women, more vocal in their support of the revolution, who also claimed their rights as women.

The exclusively female Society of Revolutionary Republicans made no overt criticism of male bias in the constitution—indeed, its members took upon themselves the role of defending this constitution against the backslidings of the new moderates. But when they agitated in 1793 for women to wear the national cockade, they too were making the point that women must be citizens. The tricolor was the symbol of the republic and the badge of citizenship; when they insisted that all women be compelled to wear it, the women of the Society of Revolutionary Republicans were staking their claim for their rights and duties. Admittedly, they found few followers in this, and indeed made themselves extremely unpopular among the women of Paris. Female challenges to male fraternity were still few and far between, but the challenge *was* there—however easily dismissed.

Throughout the 19th century, fraternity continued on its varied career, and with the development of the European labor movements it began to take on heavily masculine flesh. The fraternity of the French Revolution was undoubtedly male and exclusive, but compared with later manifestations, it was still a pretty feeble affair. Eighteenth-century France hardly lent itself to the vision of an all-embracing unity; society was too complex and divided; even a brotherhood of men seemed a far-fetched idea. Fraternity as subsequently developed by trade unionists was to tell a different story.

Capitalist industry had little time for the finicky distinctions of the feudal world, and as it asserted its dominance, workers found their similarities beginning to outweigh their differences. It was this, of course, that inspired Marx and Engels to their vision of a united and class-conscious proletariat. As they argued in the *Communist Manifesto*, capitalism seemed to be destroying the previous basis for division and distinction. "The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations." It has broken up the "old local and national seclusions and self-sufficiency," making "national one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness" ever more impossible.

Capitalism, Marx and Engels argued, was fast diminishing all those distinctions of skill, age, gender, nationality, payment that once so miserably divided us. Out of this melting pot a new solidarity would surely be forged, and it would be based on the common concerns of *class* instead of those of trade or nation or gender.

[2] Levy et al., *Women in Revolutionary Paris*, p. 92.

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So what happened? For reasons too complex to discuss here, capitalism fell far short of its early promise and failed to deliver the homogeneous working class. Instead of internationalism we have witnessed strident forms of nationalism; instead of unity between the sexes, a continued—and in some ways intensified—divide; instead of common conditions and wage levels for all, a systematic demarcation between the skilled and unskilled, high paid and low paid, black and white, "middle class" and "working class."

The unity that did develop was considerably narrower than that envisaged by Marx and Engels, and it was concentrated mainly among male manual workers. These workers did indeed come to see themselves as part of a working class (and to this extent the Marxist diagnosis has been vindicated). But they were aided in their imaginative leap by a partial redefinition of "working class" as male. Instead of class solidarity we have seen a more mongrel variant, in which class and brotherhood are subtly elided. Workers did come to see themselves as brothers, not in the abstract phrases of the "brotherhood of man" but as real, live, working men. Class unity became the prerogative of male workers.

Of course, solidarity as *practiced* has never been exclusively male, but solidarity as *imagined* has taken its images from the trade-union brother. Unlike the earlier journeyman, this brother is not inducted through complex rituals; there are no elaborate ceremonies to mark his membership in the group. He is nonetheless instantly recognizable—a somewhat burly fellow, of middle age and determined expression. He is celebrated in every labor-movement poster and recorded in all our histories of working-class struggle. He is rarely young; [here in Britain] he may—if he's struggling overseas—be black; he is never a woman.

In contrast to the abstract fraternity of the French Revolution, this was a brotherhood premised on real similarities, and perhaps because of this, it all the more firmly excluded those who were different. Brothers could recognize one another across oceans and continents because what they had in common was greater than what kept them apart. They could perceive their basic likeness through all the distinctions of trade and country, but how were they to recognize themselves in the experience of women? The characteristics associated with fraternity were all derived from the male model of work and play: it took place outside the home, in the dirt and danger of the workshop or the camaraderie of the pub.

Women workers also get their hands dirty, and the exertions of domestic labor often far exceed those of "heavy manual work." But the conventional images stress other aspects and make it hard for women to enter the fraternity. Women are thought of primarily as wives and mothers: their first task is to care for the children; their first responsibilities are to the home. When they do work at home, they are isolated from the unifying experience of socialized production—and patronized for what is seen as their narrower vision. When they go out to work, they are treated as temporary migrants from their home territory, and still denied the status of real "workers." Add to this the fact that women's jobs are often in services rather than manufacturing, in offices rather than factories, and we can see their double disqualification from the fraternity of working men.

Yet the composition of the British labor force has changed dramatically over the past 30 years, and conventional ideology needs to move fast if it is to catch up.[3] Since the Second World War women workers have been creeping up toward the half-way mark in the official labor force: after decades when they were only 30 percent of it, they have moved steadily up to 40 percent. But manual workers have slid down toward the half-way mark: twenty years ago, two workers in three were in manual jobs, but now this is closer to one in two. The old centers of male employment have been devastated; new sectors employing women have arisen in their wake. All those industries that gave us our picture of the trade-union brother—the mines, steel, ship-building, the docks—have faced massive retrenchment. The declining industries have been largely industries that used to be male.

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[3] A. Phillips, *Hidden Hands: Women and Economic Policies* (London: Pluto Press, 1983).

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By contrast, the main areas of growth have been in sectors that rely heavily on female labor. Whichever growth area we name, in public services or in the private sector, in manufacturing or in commerce, it is almost invariably associated with female employment. Health, education, banking, electronics, computers—whichever we mention, the story is the same. In some parts of the country the transformation has occurred at such breakneck speed that it is predicted that women workers will outnumber men by the end of the century. In Wales all the major economic trends have been concentrated in one small area and in an abbreviated time span.[4] The overwhelmingly male sectors of coal, steel, and slate have taken a sustained battering; the decentralization of office work has favored women workers; the expansion of health and education services has meant more jobs for women; the investment of multinationals has been in those high-technology areas that typically employ women. Economic crisis since the mid-1970s has partially disguised the trends, but the underlying pattern is nonetheless clear. The typical worker of the future will not be a burly man blasting away at the coal face; she is much more likely to be a service worker employed in a well-ventilated, dirt-free office.

Of course, many of these new women workers work part-time; of course, they still have primary responsibility for the children; of course, they still depend heavily on male earnings for their survival. None of these depressing features should obscure the fact that women are nearly half the labor force, and that our images of solidarity must adapt themselves to this. Yet as long as fraternity remains our model for solidarity, and fraternity continues as the prerogative of men in manual trades, we shall be left with little to say.

In thinking about where to go from here, it is worth noting that neither the addition nor substitution of "sisters" solves the problem. However we employ it, the metaphor of the family seems to carry its own logic. Positive as it appears to begin with, it ends us up in trouble. Within the women's movement, sisterhood has certainly acted as a powerful emotional bond, bringing to our political lives a warmth and affinity we usually reserve for what is private. It has tried to transcend the other differences between us, but to do this in ways that give weight to our individual experiences. It has given women a new confidence; challenged the elitism of much of traditional socialist politics; and it has released a vitality often absent from more conventional mixed movements. Yet for many feminists today sisterhood is fraught with tensions; what can be a unifying bond has often dissolved into division and unease.

Like its masculine counterpart, sisterhood appeals to a sense of shared experience and claims a unity that is more than shared ideas. The analogy with the family makes it clear: this is something deeper and more intimate than voting the same way in meetings. As so often, the language of kinship is employed to assert a powerful emotive bond. But the other side of this is moralism. It is more testing to be a good sister than a sound political ally, and more distressing to fail in affection than to fail in political will.

Those outside the movement have often felt excluded by the atmosphere of sisterhood, sensing that there are more criteria for membership than simply being a woman. Those inside have sometimes found themselves locked in bitter dispute. It has proved impossible to sustain a united women's movement, and for the present at least the "movement" is largely wishful thinking. That women should break up into smaller groupings, each focusing on different issues and campaigns, is not in itself a problem; when the enemy is so pervasive it is hopeless to fight on every front at once. But the division of labor has often been more than that, and a difference of emphasis has sometimes been accompanied by mistrust.

Women do share a common identity as women, but we are also divided by our different situations: middle-class women from working-class women; black women from white women; women with children from those without; heterosexual women from those who are lesbians. Sisterhood suggests that we can forge

[4] G. Williams, "Land of Our Fathers," *Marxism Today*, August 1982.

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a deep and lasting bond, so when our differences threaten to prevent this, they can generate the intensity of defeat. The problem perhaps is this: in the early years of a movement we *can* be swept into a single identity—"black is beautiful," "sisterhood is powerful"—but once that first wave of self-assertion is over, the cracks will inevitably appear. This may well be the logic of movements, and in itself no cause for concern. The difficulty is that "sisterhood" does not ease the transition to a more sober recognition of what divides us.

The family metaphor has a lot to do with this. Whether the ideal be sisterhood or brotherhood, the language of siblings imposes its own constraints. It identifies a common heritage, some shared experience that sets us apart from the rest of the world. It draws the boundaries between my family and yours, pulling us inexorably into its ghettoized confines. Sometimes it will remain an empty phrase but when it does become real, it becomes divisive and often is reduced to a minority of those it claimed to unite. So the fraternity of the working class is reduced to that of workingmen, and the sisterhood of women can be reduced to that of the "good sisters." As long as we can play with the model of the family, it is hard to resist these finer discriminations. We may be willing to *cooperate* with those we see as alien, but we will reserve our affection for those of our own kind. Unity premised on family likeness can be a recipe for disaster.

Yet we had our reasons for turning to such models, and the problem of solidarity remains. We are, I think, right to reject a politics based on self-interest: this is too fragile a foundation for what we want to build. The interests of workers in employment might be met by policies that condemn those without jobs to continued unemployment; the interests of people in one country could conceivably be met by defense policies that threaten those in other countries with nuclear war; the aspirations of some women could perhaps be met by changes that leave the rest of the women stuck where they were. Logic, surely, may tell us that this is impossible, that in the long run your interests are identical with mine. But logic looks a poor substitute for the emotive bonds of fraternity.

In criticizing the concept, I am not proposing that we abandon all it represents. Like so much in our lives, politics demands a certain romance, and the harsh logic of self-interest is rarely enough to move us. There are reasons why we thrill to those moments of unity, and reasons why we despair when they seem to elude us. But if we hope to build solidarity on a firm foundation, we have to start from a clear understanding of the differences that divide us. We will never secure alliances between men and women, black people and white people, white-collar workers and those in manual trades, if we deny the conflicts that rage between us. Unity premised on simple similarity can be powerful but in the end restrictive—attractive but in the end destructive. We are not all the same, and the pretense that we are will not help us to change our world.

It is here that we can learn from the women's movement. For those prepared to listen, the recent wave of feminism has reminded us that solidarity is not exclusively work-based. Against all the odds—despite the isolation of motherhood, the female competition ingrained in our culture, the relative powerlessness of women workers—women have managed to organize. In campaigns and debates on virtually every aspect of our existence, we have shifted our perceptions of what is possible and what desirable. In the mere 15 years of the contemporary women's movement, women have made an extraordinary—and I believe irreversible—mark on our culture. And all this has come from a movement that lacks the basic strengths of trade unionism, lacks in particular the unity of purpose that is daily reinforced in the experience of socialized production.

If I am right in thinking that such work-based unity is beginning to lose its power, we have to look to alternative sources of solidarity. Socialists had good reasons for believing that solidarity is created at work, but bad reasons for claiming this as the only site of political strength. If the women's movement has shown anything, it is that there are other kinds of unity and other forms of power.

Think of the way the women of Greenham Common have transformed the debate over nuclear weapons, and compare this with the

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empty slogans of those who say that "only workers' power will stop the bomb." Of course, a few women camped outside an army base will not change history; of course, the women who take such actions are untypical; of course, the majority of women would find it impossible to join them there. Yet women have identified with Greenham Common on a massive scale—and opinion polls show how radicalizing this experience has been.

Greenham Common is not a prototype for all future action, any more than was the male bonding of manual workers in the past. The lesson rather is that there are many different ways of working for a better future, many forms of solidarity. We should, I believe, abandon the search for a single model, discard our last dogmas on the typical "worker." Capitalism has not created a homogeneous working class and, for the foreseeable future, is unlikely to do so. What brings us together may be similarities in our work lives, but it may equally be similarities in our home lives. Sometimes it will be simply a common commitment to social or economic change, cutting across considerable differences in the way we live and the jobs we do. We should not act as if the only solidarity worth its name is the one that unites through every aspect of our existence. Rather, we should think of socialist unity as a complicated—maybe even painful—construction from many *different* solidarities, some of which will inevitably be in conflict.

The crucial starting point is not to glorify the past. Some of the old traditions were tainted and divisive; some of what we feel we have lost is better left behind. Whatever solidarity we build on for the future must rest on a new foundation. Not the false fraternity that constrains us to a family likeness, but that more complex unity that stems from facing those conflicts that can divide us. □

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Menachem Brinker

The End of Zionism?

Thoughts on the Wages of Success

The task of Zionism is very nearly completed. That is to say, the problem that Zionism set out to address is just about solved. Soon we will be living in a post-Zionist era, and there will no longer be a good reason for a Zionist movement to exist alongside the state of Israel.

That prospect need not sadden anyone. Zionism was never meant to be "a little piece of eternity, fallen into time" but, rather, a historical movement that aimed to achieve specific historical goals. The attempt to prolong its life through artificial measures—as is happening today—can only yield negative results.

There now are a number of different ways of understanding the purpose of Zionism. Their relation to the classical schools of Zionist thought, however, is curious. The aim of establishing a sovereign Jewish state was once considered by Zionists to be a *maximalist* approach, since many Zionists were willing to settle for less—a spiritual center, an organic Jewish community in Palestine, or a territorial concentration falling short of full sovereignty. Yet today a maximalist conception of Zionism must mean something else: the concentration of a majority of the Jewish people in the state of Israel. Most followers of this school believe that Zionism is a long way from completing its task, in a world where three-quarters of those identified as Jews still live outside the borders of the Jewish state.

Personally, I disagree with those of my maximalist friends who think we have a long way to go to reach their goal. It seems to me that the "normalization" of the Jewish condition in history—a goal shared by all wings of Zionism—is rapidly becoming a reality. The ingathering of a majority of the Jews into their historic homeland will be a reality, if not in this generation, then certainly in the next. This may sound odd, especially to anyone familiar with current statistics, but I believe I can explain it.

The Zionist vision of normalization reflected a perceived 19th-century norm of "healthy nations." A healthy nation was taken to be one with a majority of its people living on their national soil. The conditions of Jewish life—dispersion and its grievous twin consequences, persecution and assimilation—might never have given rise to Zionism if they had not been certified as "abnormal" by the adopted standard of "healthy nations." Persecution and assimilation had been the lot of Jews all through their history, on a scale no less fearsome than at the close of the 19th century. But only then did Zionism appear and flourish.

Political Zionism emerged as a response to a particular analysis of these conditions. And this analysis cannot be divorced from a broader contemporary vision of the need for—and the possibility of—changing the terms of national life. Where the analysis spoke of the abnormality of Jewish life, "everywhere a stranger and nowhere at home," the vision set itself to change that reality. Zionists differed among themselves as to the degree of uniqueness of Jewish life, but in one respect there was no argument: the fragmentation and dispersion of Jewish life must be eliminated. And all Zionists agreed that in at least one key aspect, the Jews must be transformed into "a nation like all others": a majority of the Jewish people ought to live in its homeland.

This article concludes our series on Israeli society and politics, all written by Israeli contributors, which began in the fall 1983 issue. The series was made possible by a grant from Mr. Harry Kahn, and we wish to thank him for it. — Eds.

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As it happened, the normalization process unfolded at a pace undreamed of by the early Zionists. No one in the first two generations of Zionism, before the First World War, could have foreseen the awesome events that would result in millions of Jews living in the homeland, less than a century after the birth of political Zionism. Despite the Zionist analyses that addressed the growing threats to diaspora Jewish survival, the Zionists were deeply shocked by the Nazi Holocaust, to the point of being unable to digest the truth at the time. This despite the fact that it was these very events that caused the unexpectedly rapid fulfillment of the Zionist goals—establishment of a state and national ingathering.

Zionism's success went hand in hand with great disaster. And now the diaspora continues to decline, confirming Zionism's gloomy forecasts. And yet, just as we failed to recognize the impending Holocaust for what it was, so today we are closing our eyes to the reality of a constantly shrinking Jewish people. We overlook the fact that the normalization most Zionists aspired to—the concentration of the greater part of the Jewish people in its own state—is fast shifting from messianic dream to simple fact.

By my accounting, about half of the Jewish people now lives in the state of Israel. It seems clear, in fact, that by the end of the century a majority will live there. Surveys conducted by the World Jewish Congress indicate that the world's Jewish population stands today at around 13 million. These surveys are prima facie open to question, since they count all first-generation offspring of mixed marriages, and even persons boarding in Jewish households. But the real question runs deeper. The researchers, acting in what I assume to be good faith, have given us a more or less accurate count of the number of persons known to them to be of Jewish origin. But this number is far greater than the number of persons who might be said to be currently *affiliated* to the Jewish people.

There is a conceptual question that must precede any such census: *who is a Jew, and who is a member of the Jewish people?* It was widely accepted by the beginning of this century that membership in the Jewish people—like membership in any other national group—was not entirely dependent on the individual's ancestry. The more thoughtful Hebrew authors of the early Zionist period wrote that such membership requires certain prerequisites: a minimal level of emotional involvement and some minimal externalization of this sentiment in day-to-day life style.

In this regard the Hebrew belles-lettrists—especially J. H. Brenner and M. J. Berdichevsky—showed more insight than most Zionist thinkers and leaders. Most Zionists debated over whether assimilation was likely to engulf whole sections of the Jewish people or only certain predisposed individuals. These Hebrew writers, on the other hand, foresaw borderline situations that could allow a given individual to be a marginal member of the Jewish people, for example, and another, in effect, entirely part of another ethnic group. For them the notion of peoplehood had a binding, normative significance, entailing some minimal sense of solidarity and mutual responsibility. (Brenner went so far as to question whether the Jews were a people at all.)

Using this classic normative definition, what sense is there in claiming that there are more than 2 million Jews living in the Soviet Union, or nearly 5 million in the United States and Canada? Can we justify acknowledging, as a member of the Jewish people, any denizen of the farthest-flung Soviet or Canadian village, just because he remembers his parents telling him how they once celebrated Passover in *their* parents' home?

A great many people live today at the outer periphery of the Jewish people. They recall their affiliation once or twice a year. And if they know anything at all about their Jewishness, it pales in comparison to what they know about the culture of the lands where they live. Abandoning the Jewish people altogether remains an ever-present possibility. And leaving is now easier than ever, since it no longer entails a religious conversion.

There are, of course, the racialist theories, among them those of the Nazis or—for all their vast differences—of the Lubavitcher Hasidim, who take Jewishness as an inalienable

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quality. They see it as a microbe (or, in Hasidic terminology, a divine spark) that courses through the veins, never dissipating regardless of changes in the individual's life or self-image. Yet most of us would agree that such persons as Boris Pasternak or Marcel Proust, Rosa Luxemburg or Ferdinand Lassalle are hardly members of the Jewish people despite their Jewish origins—even when they are, like Proust, Jews according to rabbinic law. Most of us consider membership in the Jewish people to be acquired through acts of identification—however minimal—and not through ancestry as defined by the orthodox rabbinate.

No, Jewish descent is not necessarily identical with membership in the Jewish people. We need not supply a new set of hard and fast criteria in order to recognize that the old ones are obsolete. Opinions vary on the criteria for determining ethnic identity. Yet the few well-known examples cited above should suffice to debunk the biological-determinant theory. For all our eagerness to include in the fold the largest possible contingent of the famous, we simply cannot call someone Jewish when all he shares with the Jewish people is a common ancestry.

The model that best represents Jewish identity is the concentric circle adopted by writers and theorists at the turn of the century. At the center of the model stand the Jews who spend most of their life within the Jewish community. In the next circle are those who no longer live within an active Jewish community yet clearly and consistently identify themselves as Jews. In the third circle stand the Jews who identify themselves as Jews only on special occasions and at times of crisis. And in the outermost circle are those who are identified as Jews primarily by *others*, that is, by non-Jews. I question whether those in the outer circle can really be called members of the Jewish people. In any event, more and more people are moving beyond that last circle.

I don't know how many actual members of the Jewish fold there are among those millions counted in the surveys, but I suspect that an estimate of 8 or 9 million would be generous in the extreme. The number shrinks every year, because of biological attrition and the constantly declining attachment of many Jews to Jewish life. I conclude, therefore, that we are approaching the day when more than half the Jewish people will be living in the state of Israel. It is even possible that this day has arrived and that we—prisoners of surveys that cannot survey anything important—have failed to notice it.

Zionism's success is in part a pyrrhic victory. It would be better for Zionism, and for the state of Israel, if the Jewish diaspora had not been so weakened. But we cannot ignore the fact that a secular Jewish culture and communal life barely exist anywhere outside Israel. It is undoubtedly true, for most American Jews, that synagogue-centered Jewish life is largely a secular, ethnic impulse: a religious cloak. But it still seems significant that, for the half (perhaps) of American Jewry that thinks of itself as Jews living in America—as opposed to Americans of Jewish origin—there is no other expression of Jewish identity. It is hard to believe in the future of a national survival instinct that must rest entirely on Holocaust memorials, fund-raising, and demonstrations for the endangered Jews of Russia or Israel, or a community life limited to holidays and religious rites.

Under these circumstances, the number of potential clients for the Zionist idea must be small. Zionism can have little to say to the Jews in the lands of plenty, so as to entice them to leave their homelands. Zionism (as distinct from the warm Jewish feeling that impels a Jew to donate money to Israel) can only hope to appeal to one sort of American Jew: the person whose emotions are torn between loyalty to the democratic values of American society and a desire to preserve the Jewish national identity.

For some Jews there is an emotional dualism that can be resolved only in Israel. Such Jews are happy that the unseen ghetto walls, which only two generations ago divided them from their gentile neighbors, have come down. They would be horrified at the prospect of restrictions shutting them, or their children, out of certain homes, schools, or workplaces. Nevertheless, they want their children to choose Jewish mates and raise Jewish families (whatever that may mean).

I don't know how many Jews are so con-

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flicted. But it seems clear that they are the only ones for whom authentic Zionism—meaning the idea of emigrating to Israel—can still have a personal meaning. For the others, Zionism can be at most a philanthropic exercise in which Israel is forever receiving and they are forever giving—a state of affairs so utterly contrary to any Zionist vision that it poisons our very existence and reduces the state's meaning for the diaspora to a grotesquerie.

That Zionist fulfillment no longer has any appeal for most diaspora Jews troubles the thoughtful Israeli. Some respond by insisting that Zionism must change its ideology, give up the centrality of the ingathering, join forces with elements "combating" assimilation and reducing attrition in the diaspora. Others reject any watering down of the original Zionist idea; they will differentiate between the Zionist movement, whose principal interest is promoting Aliyah (immigration to Israel), and other Jewish bodies that work to shore up Jewish life—in part by mobilizing support for Israel.

The whole debate strikes me as terribly abstract. Zionism has little to offer toward containing diaspora assimilation since the attrition process does not, in any case, follow the classic Zionist analysis. In the American melting pot, Jews don't need to join a competing ethnic-religious group in order to free themselves of their Jewishness. *Assimilation requires no special effort.* The open society takes care of it, gradually and gently, through its life styles, through social, professional, and even family relationships. For most secular American Jews it is not assimilation that requires an effort, as was once the case in Europe, but maintaining a Jewish identity. And since many of them feel no motivation to make the effort, it is safe to assume that the dissipation of their Jewish identities will continue, despite all Zionist importunities.

Zionism would do better to direct its attention toward the ingathering of those Jews whose Jewish identity has not yet dissipated. Nor should it do more. A major stream in classical Zionism—including no less a figure than Herzl himself—held that the Jewish state had a historical mission to ease the exit of those Jews who no longer wanted to be part of the Jewish people. By providing a refuge for Jews, the state would help relieve the guilt feelings of those who remain Jewish only because of an understandable hesitation to desert a sinking ship. According to this line of thought, one of the first signs of normalization will be the end of our obsession with numbers.

Two recent books with opposing views on the relationship between Israel and the diaspora illustrate how obsessed we still are with this question. The Israeli author A. B. Yehoshua, in *Between Right and Right*, expresses the frustration of many Israelis when he suggests that Israel stop suckling at the overflowing teats of diaspora Jewry. He would confront all self-identifying Jews in the diaspora with a stark choice: move to Israel or give up being Jewish. This is not the place to deal with Yehoshua's fascinating if less than convincing argument. Our interest here is in Yehoshua as a symptom: his fear that the power and wealth of the diaspora (as he sees it) will prove unbearably attractive to the citizens of the relatively poor Jewish state. The robust character of the diaspora, a full 100 years after the dawn of Zionism, seems to him a barrier to normalization. It's as if he wants the diaspora to languish, even at the cost of mass desertion. Yehoshua's vision is of Israel and diaspora locked in a battle to the death over the minds and hearts of each Jew. For him Israel's victory would mean normalization.

At the opposite pole, the American rabbi and scholar Arthur Hertzberg argues in his *Being Jewish in America* that Israel's troubles are good for the diaspora. Israel's difficulties, he says, have the effect of heating up interest in the Jewish community, intensifying the Jewishness of marginal Jews—particularly among the youth. For Hertzberg the watershed Jewish experience is the Six-Day War, that moment of spiritual exaltation when the entire diaspora rallied to the beleaguered Jewish state. Yehoshua's watershed is the period of letdown and emigration in Israel that followed the Six-Day and Yom Kippur wars.

Of course, Hertzberg would hardly recommend that Israel remain mired in difficulties. Yet it is clear that, beneath his candor, at least for this Zionist leader, a certain reversal of

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priorities peeks through: a problematic Israel plays a positive role in the survival of the diaspora. Yehoshua's desire for a speedy normalization leads him to a sort of messianic impatience to end the Jewish dispersion. Hertzberg, concerned for the welfare of diaspora Jewry, seems almost to want to delay the day of normalcy. The two perspectives stand together as blunt testimony to the fact that, as a nation, the Jews are a long way from the normal condition of a people standing secure.

My own sense is that, for all its weaknesses, Israel today is already stronger than the diaspora, and the day of "normalization" is closer at hand than we suspect. It is time to begin asking ourselves how the state of Israel ought to look under normal conditions, that is, *after* Zionism.

These words will surely be disturbing to many who don't want to witness the end of Zionism. Israel is still struggling to survive, the reader will reply; it needs to defend itself, build its economy, develop its culture. Aren't these Zionist issues? Isn't there a role for an active Zionist movement, even after Israel has become home to most of the world's Jews? My answer is: unequivocally, no.

The Zionist movement had one simple goal: to bring a majority of the Jews to an independent state. Once this is done, the Zionist idea and the Zionist movement earn a place of honor—in history. The continued existence of a Zionist movement is on the way to becoming not only superfluous but harmful. Its very existence creates the false impression that the Jewish state needs a Zionist movement to justify or guarantee its existence. The truth is the reverse: today's Zionist movement needs Israel to give it a reason for existence—as long as there are still large numbers of Jews living outside Israel, and a few of them are still candidates for ingathering.

It is standard fare at Zionist assemblies to declare that Israel belongs to all Jews, wherever they live. As a ritual to be trotted out on Sabbaths and festivals (and the atmosphere at Zionist assemblies is unflinchingly festive) the line has a certain symbolic value. It echoes with the concern every Jew feels, or should feel, for Israel's welfare. But, taken literally, it is less than empty rhetoric: it just isn't true. In any nonmetaphorical sense, Israel belongs not to all the Jews of the world but to those Jews—and non-Jews—who live there. The religious zealots of Gush Emunim wouldn't offer a Knesset vote to Brooklyn's Lubavitcher Rebbe, nor has anyone in Peace Now offered it to the Jewish dean of Harvard, though he supports its work. A normal Jewish state, populated mostly by Jews, can exist only if its non-Jewish citizens enjoy certain rights in Israel that citizens of other states—even the most devout Jews—do not enjoy.

Ultimately, the crucial questions facing Jewish history are those that are primarily Israeli-civic, and only secondarily Zionist-ideological. The issues that are primarily the concern of the Zionist movement are the encouragement of immigration and the combating of assimilation. These are important issues, but we might as well admit that we are looking at a rear-guard action at the end of a transitional phase in Jewish history. There are not many candidates left for ingathering from the free world, and not many of those on their way out of the community could be persuaded not to leave the Jewish people. For better or worse, the state of Israel is the cutting edge of Jewish history in our time, and no one knows this better than the Jews of the diaspora.

The danger in regarding the Zionist movement as immortal is that it lulls people into thinking there are ideologically "Zionist" solutions to Israel's critical problems. Gush Emunim uses the claim of "true Zionist ideology" to sanctify its goal of Jewish sovereignty over the whole historic Land of Israel. Peace Now uses it, with no less passion, when it warns that Israel is gradually becoming a binational state. Now I cannot pretend to be neutral in the debate. My sympathies are with Peace Now. But I don't see how dragging Zionism into the debate helps to clarify the dilemma confronting Israel's citizens. Zionism is like the Talmud, or Marx, in that it can be used to justify almost anything. Both of the possibilities facing Israel today—a binational state in which one nation dominates, and a humanistic state with full equality and a Jewish majority—can be *called* Zionist options.

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Equally un-Zionist is the debate raging between religious and secular Jews over the cultural fate of Israeli society. We have recently witnessed a campaign, partly spontaneous and partly organized, to put across a synthetic, idealized image of the "Zionist with Jewish roots." The image takes the form of the pioneer-settler tilling the land, phylacteries on one arm and a submachine gun under the other. For some generations, the Zionist movement managed to paper over the abyss separating the two major subcultures of contemporary Jewry—the secular and the religious. It did this by preserving its own character as a grand coalition whose purpose was no more, and no less, than to alter Jewish destiny in one specific sense. Even when it came to play the role of a "state in the making," the movement never asked its members for uniformity beyond the united effort for statehood. The ultimate meaning of Jewish fate, the various religious and secularist interpretations of Jewish history—all this was left to the philosophers and writers.

Historical Zionism was not one ideology but a coalition of conflicting ideologies: liberal and religious, socialist and nationalist, joined together for one common goal. The Zionist movement was able to survive precisely because it respected differences within its ranks. It could never have grown into a mass movement if it had adopted the style of a top sergeant ordering the troops to close ranks. Yet this is the attitude we see more and more in Israel and in the diaspora. Zionism per se has nothing to say to the cultural and social issues dividing Israel's society, and we ought to admit it.

The pressing issues of today are no longer issues for which Zionism has answers. In fact, the questions that divide Zionists from one another are more vital and critical today than the rather arcane questions that separate the Zionist from the non-Zionist. In accomplishing the major tasks it set for itself, Zionism won a smashing victory. Beyond that, everything is wide open; and since Zionism never agreed on a recipe for the character of the Jewish state, its job is done. We need not mourn.

Nor should we regret that, for many Israelis, Zionist ideology has given way to a simple feeling of home and belongingness. For *this* was the Zionist goal: the creation of a new kind of Jewish life, unselfconscious, needing no ideologies to explain or justify its existence.

Today there are Israelis by the hundreds of thousands whose nationalism is entirely non-ideological: they are Israelis because they can't or won't live in a foreign culture, or simply Israelis because they live in Israel. Isn't this just the sort of normalcy the Zionists were looking for? It would be nice if young Israelis knew more about the Zionist roots of the Israeli experience. And there is no denying that certain issues, such as immigration, emigration, assimilation, dropping out (of Soviet Jewry, for example), are still highly charged with Zionist emotions. The normalization process is still going on. But does anyone seriously believe that intensification of Jewish and Zionist education—our national wonder-drug—will affect these issues more than the normal, nonideological factors, such as increased unemployment and recession in the West, that we see at work around us?

Zionism's finest hours were in the decades preceding and following the establishment of the state, when it offered a home to masses of Jews. But whatever the future holds, as of today there are no masses of homeless or persecuted refugees knocking down the doors of the homeland. Today Zionism can only have one meaning: it is a means to an end, which itself is finally only a means. And the end of all this is something that appeals to only a select group—of which I happen to be a member. Zionism is a means to perpetuate the state of Israel; and Israel is a means to guarantee the future of the Jewish people in history.

One can, of course, always raise more ultimate questions. For example, who needs a Jewish future? What for? Well, to the first question, only one answer is possible: the future of the Jewish people is a very important matter to those who happen to belong to the Jewish people, whether by choice or lack of options. And as to what the Jewish future in history is for: once again, it serves to guarantee to those people called Jews, as much as is possible, a life of freedom and dignity, a chance to grow to their fullest creative potential, and a decent place in the sun. □

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Wojciech Sadurski

The Future of the Polish Winter

The 16 months of revolutionary euphoria in Poland—sandwiched between the Gdansk accords of August 31, 1980 that gave rise to the first independent trade unions in a Communist country and the proclamation of martial law on December 13, 1981—seem now a long, long time ago. Today the Poles are told that they have to learn to "live with reality" and that the Solidarity period was just a dream, beautiful but unreal, like all dreams. Poles "on the street" are preoccupied with everyday problems of survival in the face of an economic crisis without precedent in modern European history. But the leaders of the underground, dissenting intellectuals, and also observers abroad who had watched Solidarity with sympathy ask themselves: *Could it have worked at all? Was it doomed to failure? If not, what went wrong?*

There are those who never doubted that the end would come, in the form of either internal repression or Soviet intervention. Some skeptics advocated antigovernment actions even without believing they would bring any positive transformation. They argued that any protest movement, even if doomed to failure, was important for keeping the Polish spirit alive, in the tradition of the great uprisings of the 19th century. Skeptics outside Poland who supported Solidarity but doubted its chances of success perceived it as one more asset in the global confrontation with the Soviet Union.

But—apart from the romantic view that any revolt against oppression is justified regardless of its chances of success and the cynical view that Polish turmoil might be useful in the struggle of the superpowers—was there any room for a view at once constructive and realistic? The great majority of Poles were neither cynics nor madmen. Millions of Poles, involved in the great movement of Solidarity, believed that a compromise between democratic aspiration and realpolitik was possible. They believed that, behind the convulsive struggle between Solidarity and the Polish Communist party, the pattern of a new society was emerging that would ultimately be acceptable to the Soviet Union and would at the same time be recognized as democratic by the Poles themselves.

From among the many projects that emerged in Poland, the *limited-democratic* scenario seems to have been the most viable one. It envisaged a social contract between the Communist party and all the other social forces —such as independent trade unions, professional organizations, local associations, factory self-management councils. The party would have a dominant role in Parliament and government (thus, restraints on democratic elections) but this would be limited to certain areas, in particular foreign policy and military strategy. The political system, in which the party would dominate (owing to geopolitical requirements), would be surrounded and controlled by a network of independent organizations with an important say on relevant social issues; they would not challenge the basic foreign policy dictated by the strategic division of Europe. A complex system of guarantees would be worked out: guarantees for the society that the party would not abuse its role by trying to restrict liberty of association, personal freedoms, and so on, and guarantees that a more democratic Poland would not constitute a threat to what the Soviet Union considers its strategic interests in Europe.

The events of 1981 did not develop in accord with this limited-democracy scenario. Martial law brought an end to such hopes. But errors in predictions may be instructive. I, for one, believed that this scenario was the only viable option for democratic transformation in Po-

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land. It helps us understand the hypothetical conditions of success for the Polish revolution, and also the sources of its ultimate defeat. It may help us to answer the question, What went wrong? And to consider the chances of future democratization in Poland.

The Polish revolutionary situation involved, roughly, three main actors: the party, representing the power elite of Poland; Solidarity, expressing the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of Poles; and the Soviet Union, which considers Poland one of its satellites, but also allows it some degree of autonomy. Was there, theoretically, any possible agreement and community of interests among these three actors? At first blush, the answer would be no. The two domestic actors, Solidarity and the party, were in direct opposition. Each would be happy with the destruction of the other, and that was what, at the end, the party achieved. The party could destroy Solidarity, but Solidarity could not destroy the party. Not because the party was so powerful. On the contrary; in 1981 the party was weak, disintegrated, humiliated. But the party could not be destroyed for the simple reason that its rule was backed by Soviet domination. No rational analysis can ignore this reality: now and for the foreseeable future the U.S.S.R. has the means and the will to control the situation in Poland—at least to some extent.

Yet this reality does not necessarily mean that the revolution was from the beginning doomed to failure. It only imposed constraints on how far it could go. If Poland is not a sovereign nation, still, it is a nation. It enjoys a certain autonomy in fields that are of vital importance for the everyday life of Poles. If anyone doubts this, he need only compare Poland with Lithuania, the Ukraine, or even Czechoslovakia and East Germany.

There were a lot of things that could have been gained after August 1980 (and actually were gained), but there were also a lot of things that could have been lost. A considerable degree of academic and cultural freedom, frequent contacts with the West, a powerful church enjoying broad liberty of religious activities, private agriculture—these features do not fit the classical model of a Communist society. The claim that the achievements of 1980 could not be maintained because they did not fit the Communist model disregards the fact that there already were, and had been for decades, things in Polish society that did not fit the Communist model. But this point works both ways. It also explains why it was important to avoid any pretext that would allow the Soviet Union to intervene militarily. It is simply not true that, since Poland was to some extent under Soviet control, any change could only be for the better. There were many ways in which Polish life could deteriorate dramatically as a result of a more extensive Sovietization.

Could Poland gain the degree of freedom that I have sketched out above? The condition of success was that each of our three main actors would see at least some self-interest in maintaining, or at least in tolerating, a freer society.

• Could the Soviet Union permit such a solution? I believe that, rationally speaking, it could, although certainly with little satisfaction on its part. But if Soviet leaders concluded that there was no other way in which Poland would be (a) controlled by the Communists with regard to the main strategic aspects of power, and (b) remain a relatively stable country, then it is likely that they would have accepted the new situation. After all, with China, Afghanistan, ethnic problems at home, leadership transitions, and permanent economic disaster, troubles in Poland are the last thing they want. There are limits to the Soviets' tolerance for experiments in their zone of control, but these are not fixed forever. The scope of autonomy may be broadened if the Soviets do not perceive it as a direct threat—*vide* political freedom in Finland or economic reform in Hungary.

• But what about the Polish Communists? To begin with, there were significant groups in the Polish party that supported a limited democratization. This applies both to the spontaneously established structures of rank-and-file members and to some local leaders (in Gdansk, Poznan, and Cracow). These groups were ultimately defeated because they found no social

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support. The party's orthodoxy considered the reformists as traitors, while Solidarity treated the entire party indiscriminately as its enemy and did not want to negotiate with any of its segments. The party reformists found themselves in a vacuum.

But there are no good reasons to think that the party will always be hostile to limited democracy. True, it would have to pay a heavy price in terms of lost privileges, but it would gain, for the first time, some legitimacy. Limited democracy would protect the Communists against cyclical waves of social unrest. For it would be a condition of the social contract that none of the main actors would aim at the total destruction of the other.

• So we come to the third actor: Solidarity. From what I have said it is clear that the objective interest of Solidarity did not lie in a total collapse of Communist rule in Poland. This was not possible in any case, because the Soviet Union could prevent it. By the same token, the interest of Solidarity did not lie in a total incapacitation of the party. This *was* possible, but it would only serve to warn the Soviet Union that it had to intervene more directly since it could no longer rely on its comrades in Poland. And, finally, Solidarity's interest did not lie in removing all power from the party through, say, democratic elections. The party could not give what it did not have in the first place. It could not give up power since it held power because of Soviet domination and not because of a popular vote.

So aren't we now in a deadlock—if the party stays, there is no democracy, while if the party goes, the Soviet Union comes? Not really; politics is more complicated than this alternative suggests. The gains of the Polish August and of 1981, without precedent in Communist history, would constitute in themselves a magnificent progress. They could be preserved, I believe, so long as none of the three actors perceived them as a threat to its very *existence.* This required a lot of good will on the part of the Soviet Union and the Polish CP—and they did not display this good will. No wonder; no authoritarian regime abandons its power and privileges out of good will. If it were to force the party to give up some of its power and at the same time convince it that its existence was not threatened, Solidarity had to be very patient, keenly aware of the ways in which its interests were coupled with the existence of the party. The collapse of the party would lead inevitably to military intervention.

Now we know that the three actors did not meet on common ground. "Realists" say the catastrophe was inevitable. Perhaps my speculations are based on a primary error: the assumption that a revolution can limit itself. We know that Lech Walesa was critical of the radical strategy of challenging the government and that he urged Solidarity in late 1981 to slow down the escalation of its demands. But even he, with his charisma and political skills, and with the strong backing of the church, could no longer control the movement's development. And, let me stress, this development was to a large degree provoked by the party, which, after the purge of its own reformists, took a more and more negative attitude toward Solidarity, refusing to consider seriously any political reforms, including those concerning the mass media, local councils, social control over the national economy. So, at this stage, no one was in control. The party was weak; all it could do was to say "no." And Solidarity, with the self-reinforcing mechanism of escalating demands, could not as it seemed (and did not want to) slow down the revolutionary process. Perhaps this is what any revolution is about: it cannot stop half-way. The tragedy of Poland lies in the fact that it could not go all the way, either.

Is everything lost? After the French Revolution came the counterrevolution of the Thermidor, which opened the way for Napoleon, and he, in turn, blazed the way first for a restored and then for a constitutional monarchy. Cromwell's Revolution was followed by Charles II and James II, but they, historically, opened the way to the Glorious Revolution and parliamentary government. A good deal of progress in history comes through unsuccessful revolutions and through counterrevolutions that are, in a sense, also unsuccessful; they fail to turn back the clock of history.

I hope that this is the case with the Polish

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counterrevolution too. General Jaruzelski can suppress the opposition, disband free trade unions, and eliminate freedom of the press; but he will not be able to restore totally the situation before 1980. Counterrevolutionaries are usually no fools: they realize that what has happened cannot be undone. They operate in a new stage of historical development; from now on, nothing will be as it was. Major achievements of the Polish August have been lost (free trade unions, autonomous universities, the emerging self-management of enterprises, and more).

Nevertheless, some transformations are now irreversible. The feeling that deep structural reforms of the economy are necessary is very widespread, and even if these are merely bureaucratic, sooner or later they must bring some modernization to the economy; and this in turn requires limiting the power of the party. The French example demonstrates that a counterrevolutionary regime necessarily introduces some of the same changes that had been demanded by the revolutionaries, although in a milder form and without a populist, grass-roots input.

Another great achievement of the revolution of August 1980: fear of the authorities, so paralyzing before 1980, is no longer there. People are no longer afraid of speaking against the government; this sense of freedom is one of the victories of Solidarity. And a further achievement: the Soviet Union is probably persuaded once and for all that Poland cannot be governed by the same authoritarian means as the Soviet Union itself. Russia will therefore have to tolerate, sooner or later, a more liberal system of government in Poland.

The record of the post-martial-law period suggests that the government of General Jaruzelski is more pragmatic than ideological. By this I mean that it takes only the measures necessary for its main good, which is to prevent future revolutionary changes, rather than to reshape society in behalf of an ideology. It is more Machiavellian than Stalinist in that it avoids random terror (with few exceptions). It follows Machiavelli's recommendations to the Prince about the selective, purposeful, and concentrated use of repression. It knows that it can't be loved; what it wants is not to be challenged openly. It counts on quiet resignation while representing itself as the "lesser evil."

The regime is nonideological also in that it is not very interested in what people think and say; it becomes nervous when people take to the streets. This is perhaps a characteristic of the military mentality: significance is attached only to external manifestations of ideas, not to ideas themselves. Hence the major threat is seen as marches, rallies, underground union activities, and so on, rather than oppositional intellectual activities. This pragmatism dictates a deliberate "divide and rule" policy, which entails some concessions to groups that are perceived as particularly influential and not too dangerous. This is the case, in particular, with the intellectuals; hence an unusual liberalism (compared to the neighboring Communist countries and also to the prerevolutionary era) in such areas as the press and publications.

The counterrevolutionary government is a mixed bag of dangers and hopes. Among the most important dangers, there is the prospect of social disintegration, the loss of the new solidarity generated by Solidarity. Judging by the present public mood in Poland, this does not seem imminent. Still, the greatest obstacle to a future democratization of Poland may come from social apathy.

On the side of hope, the present counterrevolutionary regime will have to introduce economic reforms if it wants to avoid future revolutionary outbursts. These reforms will require decentralization and, hence, relaxation of party control over the economy and society. This will happen not merely because any economic reform in Poland will tend to follow the Hungarian (market) model. The major reason is that the goal of the Polish elite—to prevent social unrest—is inherently linked to decentralizing and "depoliticizing" the economy. The social unrest that proved to be fatal to the successive regimes of Bierut, Gomulka, and Gierek had its source in the working class of the shipyards, mines, and factories of Silesia, Gdansk, Poznan, and so on. The reason why industrial conflict in Poland is so crucial is clear: any

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industrial conflict automatically becomes a conflict with the system of political power. The Communist system leads to a merging of economic and political arenas. Where power over the worker is not merely economic but also political, the workers' protest is inevitably directed against the political system.

Now if the present counterrevolutionary government in Poland perceives this fundamental threat to the system, it will be bound to try to disconnect politics and economics. In practical terms, this could mean a reprivatization of some industry (which in Poland is unlikely, although a NEP-like program for small industry is not to be excluded). Or it could mean at least more independence for particular enterprises and a relaxation of the party's grip on the economy. The internal logic of this process will generate restraints upon the scope of political power.

It is by no means certain that Jaruzelski's group will continue its pragmatic line (so far, it has been very inconsistent, in this regard anyway, and some of its repressive actions contradict my analysis). Nor is it certain that the political elite will resist the temptation of re-Stalinization—an option that, in the long run, would be contrary to its rational self-interest. And it is a judgment of its objective interest rather than its good will that constitutes the source of my qualified optimism. Re-Stalinization would necessarily provoke a new revolutionary spasm sooner or later. If, however, the government chooses to follow the policy of counterrevolutionary pragmatism, then a process of decentralization, disconnecting the economy from politics, seems the only viable option. This, in turn, offers a chance of liberating gradually some social space from direct political control. Were this to happen, it would be the long-term result of the workers' revolution of 1980–81. □

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Michael Rustin

Northern Ireland: Ending the Troubles?

For a period of ten years, since the collapse of the "power-sharing" Executive under the impact of the Ulster Workers' Strike of 1974, the problems of Northern Ireland have seemed virtually insoluble. Political opinion in the two communities in the North has polarized, and the more extreme forces on each side have gained in strength. While initiatives continue to be explored in the North and the South, it seems unlikely that the two Northern Irish communities can be persuaded to agree to any substantial proposals. Meanwhile the recession has hit Northern Ireland particularly hard, and the region suffers from very high levels of unemployment, especially among the young. This, no doubt, reinforces the influence of paramilitary organizations in the depressed local communities. Sectarian assassinations, attacks on the British army and on local security forces in Northern Ireland, and bombings on the mainland continue sporadically. Although the security forces achieve local successes (recently through the use of informers), there is no sign of the decisive victory that is sometimes reported to be in the offing.

The Northern Ireland conflict, in fact, now seems interminable. While exploring the difficulties of finding a solution in the terms that are usually discussed, I shall argue for an option of repartition. It has hardly been given public consideration, but it may be the only means available of providing a permanent solution short of full-scale civil war.

All the parties to the conflict argue for solutions they claim would be democratic. But there is no agreement on the relevant national community within which democratic decisions should be made. For the Republican Catholics, it is the population of the whole of Ireland, with its Catholic majority, that should have the decisive voice in determining the government of the North. For the Protestants, it is the population of the United Kingdom as a whole, with veto power for the population of Northern Ireland (with its 2:1 Protestant majority). The demography of Northern Ireland is unfavorable to a peaceful resolution. If the Catholic and Protestant populations were nearer to numerical parity, the case for an equitable sharing of political power between the two communities would be consistent with majoritarian principles. As it is, the Catholic population is much too large a proportion of the total to be discounted, yet too small to support an arithmetic case for equity or to lead to the close matching of electoral forces that would produce equity—for example, through the agency of a balancing center party.

Each side rejects the legitimacy of the other's claims. The Provos (the political wing of the Provisional Irish Republican Army, the IRA) define themselves as soldiers but are denounced by the British government as mere terrorists and criminals. This is now complicated by the communal support for them and by the broad Catholic support for Republican aims. For the Republicans, the problem is defined as one of British imperialism, and the intransigent opposition of the Protestants to any all-Irish solution is just wished away. The Republicans refuse to recognize that the achievement of "Troops Out" might in practice mean a civil war in which the Protestants would be better placed than the Catholics in terms of arms and military organization.

Just as important as the conflicts over the

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internal government of the North are the wider national aspirations of the two communities. There is a curious symmetry between the Protestants' insistence on loyalty to a state to which in practice they have not been in the least loyal, and the Republican movement's commitment to a united Ireland, despite its lack of sympathy for the actual government and social order of the Republic. To gain legitimacy among Catholics, "power sharing" requires not only some equity in the internal division of power and resources but also some commitment to the ultimate unity of all Ireland. Halfway houses are hard to find here, since from the Protestant point of view any legitimation of a united Ireland is a step toward accepting minority status for themselves. Only a confederation of Britain and the Irish Republic could square that circle, but that has never seemed a very practical political option.

The conflicts, both over domestic administration and national affiliations, are irreconcilable under present conditions. There can be few who believe that the search for compromises between the two communities can now possibly succeed. On the one hand, as Eamonn McCann has put it,

> The Provos will not be beaten while there is no generally accepted political solution. And there will be no generally accepted solution while the Provos remain unbeaten.

On the other hand, the Protestants of Ulster have demonstrated the force of their aversion to the Catholic South, and to any subordination within a United Ireland. With the increased influence in Protestant politics of Ian Paisley, and the increasing political legitimacy of Sinn Fein and the Provisionals since the 1981 hunger strike, polarization now is more severe than since the beginning of the Troubles.

As in the instructive parallel case of the Falkland Islands, it should be noted that there are real moral complexities as well as intransigent political factors operating to impede a solution. The moral complexity arises from the partial justice of the claims of both communities to live under governments of their own choosing. The justice of the claims of the long-oppressed and subordinated Catholics of the North needs no elaboration here. There can be no justification for a form of government that denies the Catholic population both its preferred national identity, and the rights and powers of self-rule. Arguments based on the existence of a "majority" of Protestants have little weight, given the circumstances of Partition in 1922, the pressing weight of the history of Ireland and its relations with England, and the actual preferences of the Catholics of the North.

The claims of the Protestants of Northern Ireland not to be subordinated to a Catholic majority also have some symmetrical legitimacy, regardless of the greater sympathy one might have for the claims of the community that historically has been subordinated and ill-treated. Rights of self-government should not be forfeited as a result of such a history, nor can they be accorded simply on the basis of moral sympathies. The imperial origins of the Protestant settlement cannot have much weight today in deciding the territorial rights of a population originally settled 300 years ago. Nor is the assertion that the Northern Irish state is merely a dependency of British imperialism unproblematic, given the negative economic and political value of the region to the United Kingdom today. There is, as well, the evident hope of many British governments since 1968 that the Protestants would accept some dilution both of their own power and of Britain's sovereignty over the territory.

The fact is that claims of self-determination are virtually "undecidable" in such a situation. A majority in one part of a territory becomes a minority when one considers the territory as a whole. What follows is the need to separate the claims of each community to self-government from their claims to exercise government over each other. In my view, this separation, endorsing the claims to "self-determination" of both Protestant and Catholic communities without subordinating one to the other, is the essential basis for making any progress.

The claims of self-determination for both communities are, of course, uniquely difficult to realize in Northern Ireland. Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland do not live in

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clearly demarcated and self-contained parts of the territory. If they did, the Partition of 1922 would not have taken its terrible form, and it would have been easier to modify in later years. Northern Ireland is uniquely characterized (compared with the spatial separations of French Canada or the French- and Flemish-speaking areas in Belgium) by a pattern of *local* communal segregation, and broader-scale territorial intermixture. The pattern of settlement is a mosaic, whose separate pieces have become more homogeneous during the Troubles as both Protestants and Catholics have fled from exposed or mixed areas, which are, however, still relatively small and interspersed with one another.

There are predominant concentrations of Catholic and Protestant populations in different areas. The Catholic population is largest in the west and the south, and in West Belfast; the Protestants are concentrated in the east-central area, including Belfast where they comprise more than three-quarters of the population. Nevertheless, according to a report based on 1971 Census figures, Catholics are in a majority of more than 70 percent in only 2 out of 26 district councils. Even the most drastic repartition of mainly Catholic areas contiguous to the Republic would leave nearly half the Catholic population of about 576,000 in a mainly Protestant province, and would place 200,000 out of 954,000 Protestants in predominantly Catholic territory.

While the 1981 Census results are likely to demonstrate further significant population movements and an increased homogeneity within each segment of the mosaic, these movements have not redistributed the population substantially by *region,* which is the redistribution that could do most to further a resolution of the sectarian conflict.

This pattern of population distribution has more than administrative importance. The particular pattern of settlement gives a quite distinctive sociological character to the conflict within Northern Ireland, furthering a particular form of domination by Protestant over Catholic and reenforcing the historic antagonisms of the two communities. Any proposals for resolving such a deep-seated historical problem must depend on some model of analysis that allows the identification of potentially critical variables. I would attach particular importance to this pattern of locally homogeneous, mixed, but not integrated settlement.

Its particular effect has been to reenforce the social category and moral boundary of "Catholic" and "Protestant" for each community. Neither side possesses an unchallenged physical territorial space, in which a taken-for-granted sense of identity could develop, leaving time for other internal social distinctions to be elaborated. Instead, *social* space has had to be continually asserted and marked out. Hence the ceaseless process of sectarian demarcation and discrimination that inhabitants and observers of Northern Ireland describe. Names—both first names and surnames—are Protestant or Catholic. Streets and estates are Protestant or Catholic territory. Intermarriage between religions is frowned upon and unusual. And there are the endless processions and marches, so distinctive a feature of Northern Irish life, in which each side's social identity is affirmed by insult and by confrontation with "the other."

There are various contested ways of referring to Northern Ireland itself—as "Ulster," or "the Six Counties," or "the Province," or "the North of Ireland," depending on communal or national identification.

Each community has its history, its music, its days of celebration and mourning. The evocations of the Battle of the Boyne have their meaning in the affirmation of the ever-threatened existence of a sectarian community. This street ritual serves also to mark out ownership and exclusion of physical space. The Apprentice Boys' March around the walls of Derry each July, and its ritual humiliation of the Catholic territory below the walls, is the best-known example of this territorial assertion.

The emphasis in the public rituals of Northern Ireland on public mourning for deaths suffered for the sectarian cause can also be explained by the intense preoccupation of each of these communities with their relationship to the other. The commemoration of the final sacrifice is a claim on the allegiance of the living, and also a celebration of the faithfulness of the dead. Even the notorious punishments meted out to traitors and suspected informers —tarrings and featherings, knee-cappings, and

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the rest—have a specific ritual force in this culture of shame, in which obligations of membership combine with more utilitarian considerations of deterrence. Association with British soldiers is a reason for punishment. These affirmations and rejections have proved a much more powerful social force than any at the disposal of reform-minded governments in London or Belfast.

Violence and the threat of violence have a particularly important effect on the maintenance of communal identity, and the spatial pattern of settlement described above undoubtedly lends itself to a pervasive and unpredictable potential for violence. The close conjunction of areas of friendly and hostile territory provides both a secure base for the organization of paramilitary action and easy access to potential targets. It is hard to see the possibility of any long-term pacification while communities are interlocated as they are. The threat of injury or death to members of one's own community is, of course, the most potent mode of reinforcing collective identity, and paramilitary forces are able to claim support as defenders and avengers of their communities.

The sociologist Douglas Young, writing about this situation in 1973 after two years' research in Northern Ireland,[1] went so far as to argue that this state of conflict was self-equilibrating, providing a social identity and moral satisfaction for its participants that is far more potent than anything else available. He suggested that while there were no apparent formal rules of conflict resolution, there were nevertheless homeostatic tendencies that led each side to limit the damage it did to the other, maintaining communal antagonisms and thus the position of leaderships at a steady and stable level. Viewed from this perspective the British army of occupation has a most convenient function; no injuries to its members (mostly outsiders) are likely to jeopardize the state of stable tension needed to maintain the status quo.

Young argued that in Northern Ireland sectarian conflict had become an end in itself: the process of mutual self-definition by each side in terms of the hated, despised, or feared qualities of the other dominates the formation of values and identity in each community. Socialists have often pointed out how the former stratifying or oppositional principle of social class has been displaced by religion in Northern Ireland. But more private and differentiated identities are also squeezed in a situation of continuous communal pressure. This situation of "social feud" enables us to understand the futility of the claims of both opposed nationalisms. Both claims, if enacted, would lead to a civil war that no one in fact wants.

The institution of the feud can be highly stable even where opposed sides appear to work ceaselessly for each other's destruction. From this point of view, the intolerance of compromise, the ease with which its advocates have been repeatedly forced to the margins, and the lack of interest in any solutions that might be *workable* are again consistent with a pattern of pathological confrontation. To point to the self-destructiveness of Irish nationalist strategy does in no way deny the history of callousness toward the Catholic population. I would not want to minimize the experiences of a people subjected to military occupation, or the brutalized habits of soldiers in such a situation. But it is important to insist upon the inconsistencies of a propaganda campaign that judges British

[1] Douglas A. Young's paper, "Northern Ireland: a Case of the Non-Obsolescence of the Concept of Honour," drew on the ideas of Georg Simmel on conflict as a stable form of social relation. The paper is unfortunately unpublished.

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military behavior by the standards of a peaceful civil society, while simultaneously claiming the rights of military men-at-arms for its own combatants.

The entire failure to consider the possibilities of securing self-determination for both communities, by means of some form of separated jurisdiction, might in this context be described as a "symptomatic absence." These sectarian communities, as they are currently constituted, each need the existence of the other. How could Ulster Protestantism maintain its archaic fervor if it were not for the threat of Rome? How much priority would most Catholics give to the cause of a United Ireland if they were no longer subjected to Protestant power and humiliation? (Possibly about as much priority as is now given by the population of the Republic.)

Self-determination for both Catholics and Protestants, within separate states if this is what each community would choose, seems the appropriate resolution of an undecidable conflict of "majority" and "minority" rights. But the knot of this problem has been tied extremely tight, and there is no easy formula for loosening it. The pattern of intercalated settlement that maintains sectarian antipathy also makes a solution by territorial separation difficult to achieve. Essential to this argument, however, is the view that if there could be a boundary—a more conventional kind of frontier—then communal conflict would become less oppressive. At the level of everyday life, the salience of "the other" would become less, and space would appear for the emergence of other differentiations.

A political and economic order could evolve in which religious affiliation would no longer determine power and authority. Catholics and Protestants would each provide leadership in their own terrain. Security would become a more ordinary problem, since the management of law and order would no longer be superimposed on communal conflict, and police and military force would no longer, for the Catholic population, be in the hands of aliens to their community (whether Protestant or British). Conflict between provinces or states, across a frontier, is likely to be less pervasive and more limited in its scope. States habitually seek a monopoly of physical violence within their area of jurisdiction, and in the absence of the chronic pattern of communal antagonism and conflicting nationalisms, which now characterize Northern Ireland, it is likely that successor states would acquire more of these conventional powers.

A mere redrawing of frontiers, given existing distributions of population, would go only a little way toward achieving this pattern of uniform national identities within distinct territorial boundaries. A recent study of the feasibility of repartition,[2] given the existing population distribution, estimated that the most favorable redefinition of boundaries, which would involve separating the predominantly Catholic west and south from the existing territory of Northern Ireland, would still leave a very substantial number of Catholics in the remaining area. These estimates suggest that a repartition ceding the largest feasible area of contiguous territory would change a distribution of population that is now about 62 percent Protestant and 38 percent Catholic to one that would be 74 percent Protestant and 26 percent Catholic. Such a change does not meet the objective of enabling the larger part of the Catholic population to escape from Protestant hegemony, without inverting the present situation by subordinating the Protestant minority. In particular, the large Catholic population of West Belfast explains why a relatively simple territorial realignment does not achieve the desired effects.

If this solution is to be considered further, it seems necessary to contemplate the physical redistribution of part of the Catholic and Protestant population, so that a pattern of local concentration and territory-wide dispersal evolves into a more concentrated form of settlement. This idea of moving populations has seemed, understandably, "unthinkable" during

[2] This appeared as a chapter by Paul Compton ("The Demographic Background") in David Watt, ed., *The Constitution of Northern Ireland: Problems and Prospects* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1981). It concluded that repartition was unfeasible without considerable population exchange.

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the years of the Troubles so far. But it is my view that the present impasse in Northern Ireland is so profound, and its cost to the people of the province so great, that it is appropriate to consider these questions of physical location, upsetting as they may be. A state of permanent civil conflict is not one to which we should become resigned, as policy-makers in Britain seem to be. A strategy that over a reasonable length of time might resolve this historic problem on a permanent basis is worth consideration.

As all parties to the conflict have always realized, the British government's definition of the problem is itself an important factor in determining the behavior of the participants. I propose a redefinition of the problem. We should recognize and admit that Northern Ireland as now constituted is not viable, and that the claims of its two communities are, and seem likely to remain, fundamentally incompatible with one another. It is neither possible nor desirable to suppress the demands of these communities by force. Therefore the British government should seek a solution that respects the rights of self-determination of both communities by redefining boundaries and facilitating the movements of people. A Protestant province could choose independence, or remain associated with the United Kingdom. A Catholic province could also choose independence, membership in the Irish Republic, or some form of association with both British and Irish states. In this scheme, the British government would allow a choice of preferred modes of government for each community, allowing neither jurisdiction over the choices of the other.

It would be possible to outline, at an early stage, the approximate boundaries of the new provinces/states, taking into account the existing population distribution, sensible frontiers, and the need to create two viable economies. Since Northern Ireland is currently economically dominated by Belfast and has a pattern of communications centering on that city, it would be necessary to undertake substantial infrastructural investment, in the period preparatory to repartition, to ensure that a territory that excluded Belfast nevertheless was economically viable. The long history of discrimination in industrial investment between "Catholic" and "Protestant" areas would again require deliberate redress, which might be easier once the veto of Protestant power within a unitary state was overcome.

Substantial economic assistance might be sought and obtained from the European Economic Community, the EEC, and from the United States in pursuit of such a long-term resolution of the problem of Northern Ireland. Clearly, the cooperation of the Irish Republic would be of crucial importance. One would expect that the British government would also direct economic assistance toward the inauguration of a Catholic province, even if this were to choose absorption in the Irish Republic, as part of its obligation to its present citizens. The difficulties in the face of the peaceful redrawing of boundaries and the relocation of peoples are so great that substantial investments would be needed, so that people would have the promise of a better material life to justify what would in some instances be a serious loss regarding their sense of "home" and their historic territorial rights.

It seems that Derry,[3] in such a repartition, would be wholly part of the Catholic territory. Belfast would have to be Protestant, despite the great difficulties posed by the large Catholic population that would, over a period of years, have to move or accept a permanent subordinate status in the U.K. or in a mainly Protestant state. "Berlin" solutions of a divided city, with different sovereignties over different segments, do not seem promising.

The British government could assist in a process of relocation not only by indicating its long-term intentions and by appropriately planned investment, but also by intervention in the housing market. It could purchase land and houses at an advantageous price from members of either community seeking to relocate themselves as part of this program. It could then resell land and property, on favorable terms, to incoming populations. Similar rights and benefits could be offered to the holders of council (subsidized) tenancies, in terms of equivalent

[3] It may be significant that the name Londonderry was recently officially changed to its popular (Catholic) form of Derry.

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rights and financial assistance. The existing distribution of the population ensures that substantial numbers both of Catholics and Protestants would be involved in movement, and this sharing of loss and gain by both communities would provide an important element of equity.

Once separate states or jurisdictions were established, it seems likely that minority communities staying (perhaps by their own choice) within the boundary of the other would be subject to stringent demands for their loyalty and conformity. Protestants in Catholic Ireland might thus be subject to "Catholic laws" (from which they are now protected by the secularism and religious indifference of the British state). Catholics might find themselves subject to something more like "Stormont" government than has existed in recent years. Such negative prospects might also encourage population movement once the intention to define new boundaries at the end of a stated period were declared.

Such a program of communal separation and repartition must be allotted a substantial period of preparation. Even ten years might not be too much. While a solution that requires physical movement of significant numbers of people is abnormal and intrinsically undesirable, it seems less so than the indefinite persistence of the present situation. It should also be pointed out that very large numbers of people have already moved their homes in the course of the Troubles—possibly no more than would be involved in the moves here considered. In any case, while a British government might indicate its future proposals for redefining sovereignty in the province, and the principles and approximate geographical lines of repartition it envisages, it would be left to individual citizens to determine, in the conditions prevailing and anticipated, where they wished to live. No doubt, significant minorities would, for one reason or another, place retention of their existing homes above any other consideration.

Such a proposal involves real losses for both nationalisms. It is in this sense a compromise of a different type from those previously discussed. Given the dynamics of the conflict, any compromise that promised to resolve it would meet with resistance, for fear of the empty social space that would then have to be faced. A concept of "national divorce" suggests itself. Those whose political programs for the North depend on the active use of armed force seem ill-placed to criticize this admittedly radical proposal on grounds of humanitarianism and human rights, though this will assuredly not stop them from doing so. It is only the possibility that the British government could take some autonomous step toward resolving the problem that makes this solution conceivable without a civil war. Those in Britain who have at times speculated about the salutary effects that a British threat to withdraw from Northern Ireland might have on the conflict have had some awareness of the role British intervention has played (among others) as a kind of coping stone to the whole structure.

This is all a far cry from envisaging a socialist future for any part of Ireland. It is, however, likely that the displacing of sectarian conflict as the predominant issue of Northern Irish politics would lead to more open class divisions in both Protestant and Catholic communities, and might in time open the way to the emergence of a more universalistic, rational, and class-based political community. More specifically, the solidarity already seen among Protestant industrial workers might come to be deployed against, instead of in alliance with, the dominant Protestant bourgeoisie, and a Catholic working class habituated to relatively high standards of secular liberties and welfare legislation might seek to transfer these expectations to a Republican setting. Both of these factors would lessen the enthusiasm of both British and Irish governments for such a resolution, though such a threat is probably too long-term and indeterminate to weigh very heavily in anyone's calculations.

There are wider benefits to political development in Britain that might follow from a settlement of the Northern Irish problem. The process of increased militarization and civil surveillance set in motion by the security campaign in Northern Ireland would be arrested, and it would again become easier to defend civil liberties throughout the United Kingdom. The resolution of this aspect of the British

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"national problem" might also open the way to some general dismantling of the more coercive and centralizing aspects of the British national state, making it more possible to concede appropriate measures of regional and national self-government within the remainder of the British Isles.

In Britain, certainly, any serious consideration of greater regional or national autonomy now rapidly comes up against the problem of extending the proposed devolution to the Northern Ireland case. It is difficult to assess the more diffuse cultural and social effects of such an intractable armed struggle, especially given the tendency of mainland Britain to distance itself from the events of Northern Ireland. But the effects of continued terrorism, even in remote areas, reenforce authoritarian, irrational, and paranoid states of mind, and generally reduce confidence in the possibilities of rational and peaceful change. It is hard to envisage a more optimistic and progressive climate in British politics taking shape while the Northern Ireland situation remains in its present intractable and shameful state. These are additional grounds for encouraging the most open discussion of alternative options and arguments and for breaking the official consensus that seems to envisage no more than long-term containment. □

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Etudiants	312 F	172 F	320 F	176 F

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John Logue

Will Success Spoil the Welfare State?

Solidarity and Egotism in Social Democratic Scandinavia

The international economic crisis that began in 1973–74 demonstrated the value of the welfare state everywhere in the West. It cushioned the shock for both the individual and the economy, and it helped avoid the abject misery and political extremism that followed in the wake of sharp declines in the past.

This was particularly true in Scandinavia where benefit levels had been raised sharply, coverage expanded, and new programs initiated in the prosperity of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Norway escaped the economic crisis because of its oil boom, but Denmark and Sweden, heavily dependent on international trade, were hard hit. Yet they have come through the crisis with none of the misery that afflicted the unemployed in the United States. In economic adversity they remained decent societies: that is, the continued prosperity of those with work was not bought at the cost of increasing hardship for the weakest members of society, as in Reagan's America or Thatcher's Britain.

The reason, surely, is that the Scandinavian welfare states are notable not only for their benefit levels but also for their principles. During the Social Democrats' long tenure, many values of the labor movement were institutionalized. Scandinavian welfare systems bear little resemblance to the poorhouse systems that preceded them and continue, in modernized form, to shape many welfare programs elsewhere, including those in the United States.

Though the Scandinavian Social Democrats were pragmatists, they also aimed to create a society that embodied class-specific and (they were convinced) higher values than those of bourgeois society. K. K. Steincke, who as Social Democratic minister for social affairs laid the foundations for the welfare state in Denmark with the social reform act of 1933, defined "the special ethics" of the working class to include "a feeling of solidarity, a willingness to sacrifice, a subordination to common economic and political goals," which gave promise of a better social order based on "cooperation and reciprocal aid."[1]

Steincke's faith in the solidaristic norms of the working class rested on a firm commitment to the rationality of class action. The only route to economic security for individual working people was through collective measures. Generalized benefits, universalistic criteria, and the elimination of the stigma attached to using public programs signaled the extension of the idea of solidarity from the trade-union benefit fund to the entire society. Public-sector expenditures account for three-fifths of the gross domestic product (GDP) in Denmark and for two-thirds in Sweden, as contrasted to one-third in the United States.

Nevertheless, the last decade has revealed serious structural strains in the Scandinavian welfare states. The most obvious was an explosion of budget deficits to over 10 percent of the GDP, more than twice the level induced by Reaganomics. More disturbing, at least to this admirer of Scandinavia's Social Democrats, is what seems to be a deep shift in attitudes. The solidaristic values of the generations that built the welfare state seem to be giving way to more egotistical values in the younger generations. There seems to be a long-term rise in the use of social-welfare benefits that is independent of objective need. And, over time, the prevalence of high income-tax rates for average people has

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promoted a speculation in tax deductions and tax-free income—the tax-expenditure side of the welfare state—which characterizes only the wealthy elsewhere. There is a good bit of evidence that the structure of material incentives in the Scandinavian welfare states is undermining the norms that made them work well in the past. Perhaps the welfare state in its attractive, solidaristic Scandinavian variant can only be a one-generational phenomenon.

Overloading & Undermining the Welfare State

> "Eat green, vote red, and work black."
> — *Anonymous graffiti, Copenhagen 1982*

To EXPLAIN the nature of public attitudes toward the welfare state, Swedish sociologist Hans Zetterberg recently invoked the medieval cult of the Virgin with her infinite compassion. "The Protestant industrial countries have secularized . . . this vision of a helping hand that, through all life's changes, is available to the good and the bad, the happy and the unhappy, those who can express themselves and those who mumble."[2] The analogy is a good one, for however it began, the welfare state now provides help for the well-to-do as well as the impoverished.

The strain on the welfare state today is occasioned not primarily by countercyclical expenditures, high levels of benefits for the worst-off, or even the oft-cited growth in transfer payments to the elderly and the rising costs of treating the sick. These costs *have* increased. But my concern here is with a change in attitudes toward the use of programs more voluntary than those for the elderly and the hospitalized. Much of the growth in social-welfare outlays in the last 15 years has been a consequence of a shift to the advantaged of benefits originally intended for the disadvantaged. The rapid expansion of devices to reduce taxes has dwarfed the growth in social programs, as household economic patterns have been reshaped to fit the contours of the tax code. As a consequence the benefits provided to the unemployed single mother, say, have increasingly been eclipsed by those accruing to people far better off.

I am not alleging cheating. As far as I can judge, there is very little abuse, in the sense of getting benefits one is not legally entitled to, despite the laxity of safeguards in Scandinavia. What I am suggesting is that the Social Democratic success in eliminating the stigma once attached to receiving welfare benefits has not been without costs. Now that benefits are a matter of *right*, there has been a generational change in the attitudes of the middle class toward using them.

The Changing Definition of Need • There is generally an inverse relationship between levels of benefits and demand for them. Countries with high unemployment rates, for example, typically pay low rates of unemployment compensation; those with full employment can afford higher rates. The Scandinavians have managed their economies well enough to pay very high rates indeed. But there seems to be a good bit of fragmentary evidence that high benefit levels over time change citizen perception of need. Let us explore the impact of this changing definition of need in Denmark in terms of the excellent sick pay and unemployment compensation systems that replace 90 percent of lost earnings, up to a maximum equal to the average industrial wage.

The Younger, The Sicker • After the 1976 reforms, the Danish Social Research Institute undertook a survey of citizen use of social benefits and institutions; a comparable study had been made in 1966. The 1977 study found, startlingly, that the incidence of illness was notably greater among the young than among the old. In the three-month period studied, more than a quarter of employed workers between the ages of 20 and 29 were sufficiently ill to draw sick pay; only half that proportion between 60 and 66 did. From age 20 up, the incidence of illness among the employed dropped in each age category. Older workers were sick for longer periods, but far less often.[3]

One could attribute this most unexpected finding to the success of the health-care system: the longer one lives, the more exposure one has to it, and the healthier one becomes. Unfortunately this optimistic explanation does not stand up. Between 1966 and 1977, "the number of periods of sickness a little more than doubled, and almost all the increase occurred

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in sickness of less than eight days' length."[4] And the 1966 figures included those who went to work despite being sick under the less generous sick-pay rules of the time. Longer illnesses were equally frequent in both years.

Are Danes really becoming sicker? Part of the increase is accounted for by the larger proportion of mothers of small children in the labor force in 1977; they call in sick when their children are ill. That and maternity leave account for part of the discrepancy between sick rates in different age categories. However, after we account for both maternity and use of sick days to take care of sick children—and men take some for the latter purpose—*the young still have a higher incidence of sickness than the old.*[5]

I know of no objective evidence for increased malingering. In fact, after the sick-pay system was improved by raising benefits and dropping the unpaid three-day waiting period in 1973, the number of people calling in sick actually fell in some firms, much to the amazement of employers; apparently people who were willing to call in "sick" at their own expense were not willing to do so when they got paid for it. What seems to be happening is that the threshold for considering oneself sick—at least as far as going to work is concerned—has been progressively lowered. Ailments ignored in the past (and hence not registered in the 1966 survey as "going to work despite being sick") have become grounds for staying home. Sickness, at this level, is voluntary.

Part-Time Work or Part-Time Unemployment? • Unemployment, at least in times of recession, has traditionally been as involuntary as death or taxes. That remains true today. But there are some quirks in Danish unemployment statistics that suggest that good unemployment compensation (and Danes can draw 90 percent of their wages up to a ceiling of about $225 a week for 30 months) may change the definition of unemployment.

Consider the impact of supplemental unemployment compensation paid to those employed part-time but seeking full-time work. This admirable system not only protects those dependent on the weather, such as construction workers, and on intermittent or seasonal work, such as longshoremen and workers in fish and packing plants; it has also encouraged firms to maintain their full labor force on short hours (with supplemental unemployment compensation) during the downturn.

It is also striking that unemployment rates by marital status reveal a curious sexual difference. While single, divorced, and widowed women all have lower unemployment rates than their male counterparts, married women have higher unemployment rates than married men.[6] The best explanation for the discrepancy is that married women are more likely than others to hold part-time jobs while seeking full-time work.

Precisely the same situation obtains in a number of university-educated groups where extended periods of part-time work were once considered part of a normal career pattern. A part-time university instructor, for example, who draws a very good hourly wage in Denmark, will now generally draw supplemental unemployment compensation as well. It is in fact not difficult to find examples of university-trained professionals who make more money working part-time than industrial workers make for full time yet top off their wages with unemployment compensation. Unemployment records show supplemental payments to be more common among the university-trained than among blue-collar workers except those most affected by the weather as are, for instance, bricklayers, and those for whom full-time jobs are rarities as they are for musicians.

This pattern is not only legal but, in a sense, just. After all, why should professionals who can only find half-time work be treated worse than dockworkers who aren't paid when there are no ships to unload? Still, supplemental unemployment compensation was not intended to provide an income increment for reasonably paid professionals.

As in the case of the sick-pay system, we are discussing here not abuse but a change in attitudes. A university teaching assistantship, while still a step on a career ladder, now also represents a failure to find a full-time university job. The wife's half-time position, which used to be a welcome supplement to the family income, is now a bigger supplement because it is only half of a full-time job.

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A final testimony on changing attitudes: despite increased eligibility for unemployment-compensation payments, the elimination of the unpaid waiting period, and a doubling of real benefits between 1966 and 1977—which is reflected in the fact that only about a quarter of the unemployed in 1977 reported drawing out family savings while unemployed—the proportion of the unemployed seeking emergency aid from the social relief office almost doubled between 1966 and 1977 from 12.5 percent to 23 percent.[7] And this increase occurred although the unemployed in 1966 were more likely to be blue-collar workers and the sole support of their families than those in 1977.

In Loco Familias • Among the most expensive new programs initiated in Denmark and Sweden have been those in which the public sector has assumed some of the traditional family responsibilities for care of children and the elderly. Most notable has been the development of excellent systems of home assistance for the elderly and day care (and after-school care) for children.

The development of these programs reflected not only the traditional Social Democratic concern with conditions of working-class families—mothers forced by economic necessity into the factories, toddlers abandoned to the tender mercies of slightly older siblings—but also responsiveness to the new women's movement. For these family roles had been viewed as women's responsibilities.

If current conservative proposals to reduce unemployment by driving women back into the kitchen are motivated more by discomfort with sexual equality than by concern for the family, it is still true that the open-ended commitment to public-sector provision of some of the usual "housewife's" tasks has proved expensive. Again a major reason is the increased demand for services stimulated in the middle class when programs initially designed for working-class mothers proved successful.

Consider day care. The provision of a superb, heavily subsidized day-care system has, in a single generation, changed the middle-class ideal. Mothers no longer give up paid employment until their youngest child reaches nursery-school age, but instead take only the paid months of maternity leave and consign infants to day care at the age of six months.

Other factors, of course, also contribute: consumption plays a bigger role in personal identity, and the tax structure adds special incentives for wives to enter the labor market.[8] The unemployment-compensation rules now require that unemployed mothers keep their kids in day care so they remain "available for the labor market" and hence eligible for unemployment compensation. But the professionalization of the mother's role has also promoted a kind of day-care ideology, which holds that only professionals are fit to raise small children. Symptomatically, official Danish day-care statistics categorize children as "taken care of in day-care institutions" or "taken care of by [approved] day nurses," and "not taken care of," that is, left to their mothers.[9]

The result has been an explosion in demand for day care. Although the number of day-care places in Denmark increased by 150 percent between 1971 and 1981 and the number of under-twos in day care doubled (from 20 percent to more than 40 percent of children) between 1976 and 1981, waiting lists in many places have lengthened. The situation seems analogous to the American urban freeway problem: when we build more, more people drive to work and the traffic jam remains. The major beneficiaries of the public subsidy to day care (which in Denmark is now larger than the cost of higher education) are higher-income families. More surprisingly, white-collar families get about 50 percent more of these benefits than blue-collar families.[10]

Over time, successful public provision of services formerly provided by the family tends to crowd out the provision of such services between family, friends, and neighbors. Should you really insist on helping old Mrs. Hansen next door with her shopping if the city will provide her with home assistance? Your help is irregular; the public sector does it better. And why impose on Grandma to keep the baby when excellent day care is available? The logic, over time, becomes compelling; the demand for public services, greater.

The traditional ties of obligation in civil society—of family, neighbors, workmates, and friends—depended on reciprocity; they de-

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manded reciprocity. Freeloaders had to be very charming indeed if they were not to be ostracized. But the public sector makes no similarly direct demands on the individual. Your obligation is to pay your taxes. And taxes, among rational people, were made to be minimized.

Tax Expenditure as Entitlement

FINANCING Scandinavian-sized public sectors is expensive. In 1960, Danes and Swedes were no more heavily taxed than Americans. But the higher benefits, expanded coverage, and higher utilization rates of the last two decades sent costs soaring. Today Scandinavian taxes take roughly half the GDP versus a third in the U.S. So Danes and Swedes pay taxes on practically everything, necessities as well as luxuries, virtues as well as vices. They even pay taxes on taxes: the exorbitant excise taxes on gasoline, cigarettes, and alcohol are, by some Kafkaesque sleight of hand, considered to be added value for the purpose of assessing the value-added tax (VAT). Above all else, of course, they pay high taxes on income.

Despite the notoriety of Mogens Glistrup's tax resisters' party in Denmark, political support for high tax levels in Scandinavia has been impressive, at least in contrast to the United States. Even at the individual level, willingness to pay has been startlingly high. But there is evidence that this, too, is changing.

Sales and excise taxes affect consumption patterns. But so long as they are concentrated on daily necessities and on those vices without which life seems unbearable, their ultimate effect on behavior is limited. This, unfortunately, is not true of high-income tax rates. We may not be as quick as Pavlov's dogs, but the learning process is just as certain. When your marginal tax rate (the tax paid on your last dollar earned) hits 70 percent as it does in Denmark at about $20,000 in taxable income, or, worse, 85 percent as it did for many in Sweden prior to January 1983, you learn to run for the nearest loophole. (The situation is new. In Sweden in 1970, for example, it required a taxable income of the equivalent of 500,000 Swedish 1981 kronor—about $100,000 and a very high income—to reach the marginal tax rate of 70 percent; in 1981 you could achieve the same distinction with an income of under 100,000 Skr.)

At these rates, *every* loophole acquires a constituency of users that extends beyond corporate lawyers, society surgeons, and the very rich and will include carpenters with a bit of overtime and nurses who work inconvenient hours. In Denmark an individual drawing nothing but unemployment compensation who has the bad judgment to claim no deductions will pay fully 40 percent of his total income in income taxes. Far from stifling initiative, as conservative journalists allege, high marginal tax rates have given Scandinavians every incentive to divert taxable income into tax shelters.

They have done so with startling success. It is reassuring for one's belief in democracy to find that the ordinary person can demonstrate as much ingenuity in pursuing tax deductions as a corporate tax expert. But reshaping economic behavior to fit the tax code does little for the efficiency of the economy.

The overall structure of Scandinavian tax expenditures has encouraged households to increase debt-financed consumption, stretching family budgets to the breaking point, and increasing demand on welfare programs for emergency relief. One principal culprit is the deductibility of interest on private debt, a feature common to the American, Danish, and Swedish tax systems but rare in other industrial countries. The possibility of tax arbitrage, given high marginal tax rates, deductible interest, and tax privileges for capital gains (tax-free in Denmark and taxed at low rates in Sweden), has induced real creativity in converting current income into quick capital gains, frequently through deeply discounted short-term bonds and borrowed money. This deduction has also fueled a boom in real estate prices that has pushed housing costs from some 13 percent of net disposable family income in Denmark in 1966 to 21 percent in 1976.

The combination of high marginal tax rates and deductible interest means that household borrowing ceases to be sensitive to interest rates. Though interest rates in Denmark doubled from 9 percent in 1971 to an apparently prohibitive 18 percent in 1980, the posttax rate

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for those at the 70 percent marginal level went only from 2.7 percent to 5.4 percent, lagging far behind the rate of inflation. During the last decade, the posttax, postinflation interest rates for the majority of middle-class Danes and Swedes have always been negative in real terms. The other side of the coin is that the return on savings after taxes and inflation has also been negative. It pays households to borrow, not to save. And they do.

Unfortunately for employment, industrial investment is interest-sensitive. The high interest rates that won't hamper household borrowing do deter business borrowing for investment. One gets the anomalous situation where the captain of industry declines to borrow to buy new machinery for his factory while borrowing heavily as an individual to build a new house.

Thus the long-term effect of high, progressive income-tax rates is not to increase economic equality but to accelerate tax planning. At the Scandinavian rates, deductions and tax-privileged income have risen far more quickly than taxable income, because tax expenditures amount to voluntary, open-ended entitlement programs. Unlike other welfare-state programs that have some relation to need, the only qualification for a tax expenditure is having taxable income. Worse, differences in taxes actually paid among normal-income families depend on their willingness to "exploit" the tax system, and the difference in living standards that results is clearly visible.

Tax statistics testify to citizens' adaptation of their behavior to the contours of the tax code. Between 1971 and 1981, deductions rose from 13 percent to 23 percent of taxable income in Denmark despite some tightening of tax provisions. Needless to say, the principal beneficiaries were the well-to-do: among the top 5 percent of households, deductions jumped from 17 percent to 37 percent in the same period.

Vision in an Era of Moral Ambiguity

> "There's a lot of talk about lack of vision. But what does a politician get out of vision if the voters throw him out in the election?"
> — *Ole Borre, in an interview in* Politiken, *Copenhagen, September 5, 1982*

VISION IS NOT THE FIRST ATTRIBUTE one associates with politicians, but many Scandinavians would share election expert Ole Borre's sense that it has become less common than it was in the past. Nostalgia? Probably; but I also suspect that it reflects reality. The vision of the welfare state animating Social Democratic politics in Scandinavia for half a century has been realized. What we see now are the problems of its success.

Through the intermittent hard times since 1973, Danish and Swedish welfare states have proved their worth—from their employment and income-transfer policies to their care for the old, sick, and handicapped. But the greater expenditures imposed by countercyclical policies, demographic trends, and rising rates of program use have stretched resources to the breaking point, especially as tax expenditures steadily erode the resource base. The resumption of steady economic growth would help; but it will not, by itself, eliminate the strain, for it will reduce only cyclical expenditures. In the long run it is going to be difficult to avoid marked changes in the Scandinavian welfare state. The question is whether these will take the form of general benefit cuts that conservatives advocate, which will hit the worst-off hardest, or whether the Social Democrats can develop better alternatives.

The burdens on the welfare state of increased countercyclical spending (principally for unemployment compensation, emergency employment programs, and emergency welfare payments) have, unquestionably, been heavy. During the economic crisis, the price tag for direct subsidies to workers and enterprises in Sweden seems to have ranged between 3 percent and 5 percent of the GDP; in Denmark the

Erratum

In my brief commentary on refugee policy in the Fall 1984 issue of Dissent, *there is a strategic omission. A sentence discussing the Haitian boat people should have read, "However, the Act [of 1980] did* not *provide refugee status for those who are in that twilight zone . . . , who might be called 'economic migrants for political reasons.'"*

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direct costs for countercyclical programs—and here our definition is a bit broader—have risen steadily from 3 to 7 percent of the GDP, as contrasted to 1 percent in the pre-1973 period.

Heavy pension and medical costs—the price of an aging population—are tending upward. In Denmark the public-sector expenditures for pensions, care for the aged, and all medical costs (there are no separate figures for the aged) increased from 12 percent of the GDP in 1970 to 13.8 percent in 1978. They are higher today and will continue to rise. This surely is a core concern for the welfare state, and the only socially equitable way to reduce costs markedly—postponing the pension age for healthy elderly—is hardly practical as long as unemployment remains substantial.

It is still more difficult to assign a cost to the upward trends in the use of sick pay, unemployment compensation, and day care. Doing so requires heroic assumptions. Is the rising demand for day care principally a product of cultural change, independent of the state? Or is it primarily a result of state policy?

Estimating the price of tax expenditures is easier. If we limit concern to tax expenditures that are freely chosen, and not associated with earned income, then the specific tax benefits from interest on debt unrelated to the employment, from tax-privileged savings excluding collective pension funds, and from the tax-free status of realized capital gains on stocks, bonds, and mortgage notes amount to something like 6 to 10 percent of the GDP in Denmark in 1980. Unlike attitudes toward sickness and unemployment, there is no question of changing social definitions here: this is exclusively a matter of economic incentives. Moreover, there are good reasons to believe that these tax expenditures have created substantial economic dislocations, particularly in Denmark, which probably reduce the efficiency of the managed market economy.

An interesting policy innovation is the Swedish tax reform, which halves the deduction for interest on private debt while cutting marginal tax rates so that, by 1985, 90 percent of all taxpayers will face marginal rates of 50 percent or less while only 5 percent will have marginal rates of over 55 percent. The tax advantages of borrowing will decline sharply. There is little pretense of egalitarianism in the reform—it benefits those who save relative to those who borrow, and savers have traditionally been well-to-do; but current tax expenditures are probably more inegalitarian and, worse, impose tax penalties on civic morality.

Political Barriers • Four political problems, all institutional and ideological, make it hard to modify the welfare state. The first is obvious: governmental stability and, with it, consistency in policy have declined dramatically. From 1929 to 1973 the Social Democrats governed Denmark for all but ten years, while their Swedish colleagues held office continually from 1932 to 1976, except for a few months in 1936. But since the 1973 election plunged Denmark into something approaching parliamentary chaos, Denmark has had a succession of weak minority governments, and after 1976, Sweden's nonsocialist parties ran through four governments in six years before losing office to the Social Democrats in 1982. Coherent policy is difficult under these circumstances.

The second problem exists no matter which party is in office: while budget and tax expenditures are pushed up without decision or even consent by the political authorities, political factors militate against any cuts. The public sector has become a mass employer in its own right. More people are employed in Denmark in day care alone than in the textile, garment, and shoe industries combined. The biggest union in Sweden today is no longer the metal workers' but the municipal employees'. We know the clout that American public-employee unions have in municipal politics, and in Denmark and Sweden the tie between public-sector unions and the Social Democrats rivals that of the Firemen's Benevolent Association and the party in machine-run cities in the United States. Likewise, every tax expenditure is stoutly defended by those with a vested interest in it. The trouble is known elsewhere: while every loophole has its well-organized defenders, there is no lobby at all for general tax reform. The curiosity is that the Social Democrats come closer than any other group in having an interest in the general health of the capitalist economy.

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The third problem is closely related: the corporatist structure of the Scandinavian political systems. Programs are put into place not by simple political decision but by agreement between interest groups and the state, with all the bargaining and horse-trading that implies. These programs come with a built-in constituency. Interest organizations see "their" programs as if they were contractual agreements that the state cannot abrogate unilaterally. The state has this right legally, of course, but in those sectors where corporatism is strong, its hands are tied by the need for continuing corporatist relations in the future.

Finally, there is the fourth, ideological problem: the Social Democrats are ill-equipped for retrenchment in the public sector, while the nonsocialists lack the political credibility to do so. The welfare state in Scandinavia is, after all, a Social Democratic creation. The party sees it as the "strong society" that takes care of the weak, if not as a surrogate for socialism, and the party defends it with the same vigor that Congressman Pepper brought to dealing with the critics of Social Security.

That public-sector expansion has so changed incentives that many of the strong now see more opportunity in the "strong society" than in the private sector is often difficult for Scandinavian Social Democrats to accept. In my experience the typical Social Democratic response is either to deny the existence of the problem or to regard it as cheating, to be dealt with as harshly as one deals with economic criminality. But it is not cheating, and it does exist. And it is generated by what are otherwise virtues of the public sector.

Moral Dilemmas • To discuss politics in terms of moral choices strikes a chord of unworldly idealism. Yet the Scandinavian welfare states rest on a clear moral premise: the obligation of society to protect its weakest members not only against thieves, murderers, and foreign enemies, but also against economic catastrophe. It is this economic security that provides a basis for individual liberty.

This ethical view reflects not altruism but a fundamental sense of group solidarity. Most basic Scandinavian welfare programs, including unemployment compensation and the national health system, had their origins in benefit societies organized by union locals, farmers' organizations, or on a neighborhood basis. In their original form, these benefit societies owed their existence to a clear connection between obligation and rights. The right to benefits was premised on the obligation to contribute; without the latter, the former could not have existed.

If there is a common root for the current ills of the Scandinavian welfare states, it is that in the eagerness to see benefits generalized and minimum levels raised, the ties of reciprocal obligation have been lessened. While the connection between benefits and obligations remains at a societal level, it is far more abstract than the individual obligation of the past. The sense of social solidarity remains engrained as a cultural norm and continues to be invoked to justify paying the heavy costs of social programs; but its force has diminished, and the limits it puts on the pursuit of individual interest are increasingly nebulous.

Breaking the link between benefits and obligations has encouraged the use of benefits and avoidance of obligations. The state found itself expanding social services that have tended to crowd out civil society's obligations between family and friends. The aim has been admirable. But the effect has frequently also been to accelerate the atomization of society, creating a need for greater state aid.

In a small group there is a natural limit to individual overuse and avoidance of obligation. Once this was internalized as a class-specific cultural norm. A homily endlessly repeated in the 19th-century Social Democratic press was the moral superiority of the trade unionist who accepted his duty to his fellows over the ego-

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tism that characterized the bourgeoisie. But when the nexus between obligation and benefit dissolves and the citizen deals not with his workmates or neighbors but with the state, the stigma attached to "using" the system is much diminished. You no longer victimize friends and colleagues but cleverly fool some distant opponent. Mogens Glistrup's celebrated characterization of the tax resister—and he was thinking of himself—as the modern equivalent of the Resistance fighter during World War II is the perfect rationalization of egotism.

The American welfare state, such as it is, has rested on a self-limiting combination of altruism and self-insurance: altruism toward the worst off, self-insurance for oneself. Altruism was sufficient to prevent starvation, and collective self-insurance cut risks of catastrophe; but neither offered a basis for more far-reaching programs. By contrast, the Social Democratic concept of reciprocal obligation contained no intrinsic limits; programs could be extended into any area in which citizens agreed to accept obligation.

And so the situation in Scandinavia today resembles the old problem of the common village grazing lands. Everyone has a right to use them—and should. It is to each individual's advantage to run every cow on them that he can, but if everyone does that, the common lands will quickly be overgrazed and cease to support village herds. The success of the welfare state—like that of the commons—depends on some restraint in use. When restraint is no longer automatic, even Social Democrats who draft blueprints of the future social-welfare system have to talk less of "cooperation and reciprocal aid" and more about manipulating individual incentives and disincentives to encourage self-restraint.

Notes

This article draws on and has been reworked from a longer paper, "Must Welfare States Contract? Hard Choices in Economic Stagnation," presented at a conference on Futures of the Welfare State at Indiana University, March 1983. It will appear in revised form in Futures for the Welfare State, *edited by Norman Furniss.*

[1] K. K. Steincke, *Fremtidens Forsorgelsesvaesen* (Copenhagen: Schultz, 1920), pp. 9 and 5.

[2] Hans L. Zetterberg, "Hur värderingarna förändras i välfärdsstaten," in Nordal Akerman, *Välfärd—och sedan? Teorier och experiment för ett alternativt samhälle* (Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, 1981), p. 107.

[3] Mogens Kjaer Jensen, *Sociale problemer og ydelser 1966–1977* (Copenhagen: Socialforskningsinstituttet, 1980), p. 15. The Danish Employers' Federation statistics seem to support the survey's finding that the young are sicker than the old.

[4] M. Kjaer Jensen, *Sociale problemer* . . . , p. 57.

[5] Jon Sundbo, Annemarie Knigge, Susanne Dalsgaard Nielsen, and David Bunnage, *Arbejdsfravaer* (Copenhagen: Socialforskningsinstituttet, 1982), pp. 100–107.

[6] *Arbejdsloshedsstatistik*, 1982: 9 (December 8, 1982) and *Statistiske Efterretninger. Arbejdsmarked* 1983: 1 (February 2, 1983).

[7] M. K. Jensen, *Sociale problemer* . . . , pp. 45, 54–55.

[8] The marginal tax rate for additional family income in Sweden was 68 percent in 1978 for production workers if the husband doubled the household income but only 37 percent if the wife achieved the same result by taking a job; the Danish figures were 63 and 44 percent. (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Economic Surveys: Sweden*, 1981, Table 12.)

[9] *Statistiske Efterretninger*, A 1982 no. 12, p. 376.

[10] *Statistike Efterretninger*, A 1980 no. 26, pp. 884, 890. □

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Camus and the Algerian War

Joseph Frank

Michael Walzer's penetrating article on Camus in the Fall 1984 *Dissent* ("Commitment & Social Criticism: Camus's Algerian War"), is a very convincing defense of that much-maligned writer's position during the French-Algerian war, when he refused to ally himself, unlike the majority of the French intelligentsia, unconditionally on the side of the FLN. This defense, it might be said, coincides with the rehabilitation of Camus's *political* reputation in France in recent years, which had sunk, at the time of his death, to a very low point. Partly as a result of his position on the war, but mostly because of the fierce attack made on *L'Homme Révolté* by Francis Jeanson in *Les Temps Modernes* (Jeanson, by the way, was a leader of the active underground of French sympathizers aiding the Algerian rebels), Camus had lost all the considerable stature he had acquired in the immediate, post-Liberation years. But the present French mood is marked by a sharp reaction to its formerly prevalent infatuation with Marxism; and the ensuing tenderness toward the French Communist party and the Soviet Union —whose interests were considered by Sartre and company, for all practical purposes, to be identical with those of the French working class—has all but vanished. As a result, the influence of Camus has taken a new lease on life.

Let me cite, as one example, a little brochure, *Enquête sur les idées contemporaines*, published as a series of newspaper articles a year or two ago, in which J. M. Domenach attempts to sum up the present cultural scene for nonspecialists:

> Ah! Camus [he writes], how Sartre had sneered at his rescue-squad morality [which means, of course, a readiness to come to the aid of victims of catastrophe no matter what the cause]. But now these defrocked Marxists [the "new philosophers," ex-Maoists all, on whom Domenach was reporting] set up Doctors without Frontiers and organized the march for survival aimed at Cambodia.

Much of what the French press reports about the Afghan rebels comes from information furnished by the young doctors sent to aid the guerrillas by the organization that Domenach mentions. And he could also have included among his references the famous meeting on behalf of the Vietnamese boat people, at which two old classmates of the Ecole Normale, Raymond Aron and Sartre (the latter then blind), met after 30 years of political enmity and shook hands. Camus would certainly have been there if he had been alive; and the fact that such a manifestation could be organized at all was a posthumous triumph for his *morale d'ambulancier*.

What this means is that the issue, posed by Walzer, of the *moral* basis of political action (or the attempt to justify political action in moral terms) has now taken on a renewed importance in France—while during the period about which he is writing it had simply been dismissed with an imperious wave of the pen.

Sartre had declared, in a notorious passage of *Saint Genêt*, that in the climate of those postwar years, "every morality that does not present itself *explicitly* as *impossible today*, contributes to the mystification and alienation of mankind." Morality is thus put on the shelf as irrelevant, given the political situation. And while Sartre, like a good Existentialist, does not forget to speak of "a consciousness [presumably his own] . . . living in a state of laceration [because] action has to give itself ethical norms in this climate of insuperable impossibility," there is very little evidence of such "laceration" in Sartre's own career or the picture we derive from the autobiography of Simone de Beauvoir. For such wrestlings with conscience we have to go, rather, to Camus, who genuinely took ethical norms seriously, and, as Walzer writes, refused to subordinate morality (which involves people, not political abstractions) to the left-wing political imperatives of the moment.

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There has been a considerable revulsion in recent years against just such a subordination—as witness the title of the first section of a book by one of the "new philosophers." In *Le Testament de Dieu*, Bernard Henri Lévy writes: "*Limiter le politique pour faire place à l'éthique.*" Directly inspired by Camus's *Actuelles*, and containing a heart-felt tribute to his example—"one cannot repeat too often how upright a figure he was, and still remains, as an intellectual"—this work contains a slashing attack on the idolatry of History (primarily, though not exclusively, in its Marxist-Leninist guise), which provided the largest part of the French intelligentsia with *their* ethical norms during the past half-century. Nor is such an attack in any way an unfair exaggeration: "Camus was an idealist, a moralist, an anti-Communist," writes Simone de Beauvoir in *La Force des Choses*; "forced to yield a moment to History, he aspired, as quickly as possible, to withdraw from it."* The capital H in the text tells the whole story; History was calling the shots; and one wonders, as a result, if the exclusively moral terms in which Walzer depicts Camus and his critics ("love versus justice") does not tend somewhat to blur the real issue. Camus, who refused to abandon his mother and brother (that is, the *pied noir* community**), represents love; Sartre is thus cast as the advocate of a more universal law of justice.

The Sartreans, if we are to judge by de Beauvoir's remarks, would not have justified themselves in such terms at all. By this time they had concluded that morality was just the hobby-horse of bourgeois intellectuals. They, on the other hand, wished to be hard-boiled *Realpolitiker* (but not enough to join the Communist party, which would have meant surrendering their own bourgeois liberties), who knew at last where History was going and had jumped onto the locomotive.

Nor am I at all sure that I would accept, as unquestioningly as Walzer seems to do, that Sartre had truly lived up to his own ideal of the social critic, whose mission was to break with his own background and "subject it to an unrelenting analysis and critique." So far as such self-criticism involved a hatred of "le bourgeois," the class from which he came himself, Sartre was hardly breaking with any French *cultural* tradition in subjecting it to merciless criticism. He was merely taking his place in a long-established line going back at least to Flaubert, the writer with whom, and certainly for this reason, he maintained an ambiguous love-hate relationship all through his life. But even in terms of the concrete French social-political situation of the Algerian war years, the stand taken by Sartre did not have that air of lonely and lofty prophetic dignity that Walzer seems willing to attribute to it. To be a social critic in Sartre's sense, he writes, "is a heroic project; and the result is a hero, standing apart from his fellows, bound to his critical principles." Whether we are being asked to accept Sartre as such a "hero" is not quite clear; but it is suggested so strongly that a few remarks seem to be in order.

IN THE FIRST PLACE, if this were so, we would have to assume that the French people had actually been heart and soul engaged in defending their colonial enterprise; but this was by no means the case. I spent a good deal of time in France during those years, and I recall being struck even then by how little active propaganda there was for the French Army fighting in North Africa, how little the various governments that succeeded each other seemed to want to remind the people of what was going on—obviously because they knew that such efforts would meet with very little sympathy. The press coverage was neutral at best, hardly drum-beating or rabble-rousing; the atmosphere was much like that of the Vietnam war days in the U.S. (without, to be sure, the mass rallies and overt defiance of authority). There was nothing particularly *heroic*—in the sense of braving the anger of an outraged populace—about writing in favor of the Algerian rebels, or against the war, though those engaged in the underground *réseaux* ("networks") ran very concrete and substantial risks. Sartre, however, should not be confused with Zola defending Captain Dreyfus.

Indeed, if one tries to imagine the "world" of Sartre and Camus ("world" taken in its existentialist sense as a primarily social-cultural environment, not one defined simply as an abstract geographical, national, economic locus), then, it seems to me, there would be some justification for reversing the manner in which Walzer depicts their differing positions. Sartre, in his account, courageously rips himself free from all attachment to his inherited roots; by contrast, and even though Walzer defends

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* As regards Walzer's remark that de Beauvoir's memoirs are "wonderfully lively and open-hearted." For the first, yes; but there is nothing "open-hearted" in her depiction of Camus. It is, rather, mean and vindictive, and his motives for differing with the Sartreans are constantly reduced to being only a reflex of his wounded vanity—he was losing in the Parisian popularity contest. This tells us something about *her* motives.

** *Pied noir* ("black foot"), as Walzer explained in his article, was the mainland name for the French settlers in Algeria, many of whom were poor farmers, imagined, like our hillbillies, as barefoot and dirty.

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such a choice, Camus refuses to break so thoroughly with a narrower and more local loyalty to his native community.

Such a juxtaposition, however, tends to forget that the "world" of both was really that of the French intelligentsia, predominantly left-wing and in favor of the anticolonial uprising; Sartre was not risking anything he valued by going along with *them*. On the contrary, he was very eager to keep their favor, and worried about losing the readership of his journal if he ruffled their preconceptions in any way.

A recent solid and very informative Italian book that has come my way (Anna Boschetti's *L'Impresa Intelletuale, Sartre e 'Les Temps Modernes'*), studies "*le champ intellectuel*" (the term is used in the sense given it by Pierre Bourdieu) within which Sartre functioned, his relation to the whole social-cultural context from the beginning of his career up through 1957. And one sees here very clearly how closely he kept his eye on the compass of public opinion in this "world," how eager he was to steer a steady course. Sartre was so determined not to offend his audience that he got rid of Merleau-Ponty when the latter's growing disillusionment with the Communist line (after the invasion of South Korea) began to be noticeable and to arouse reader protest.

Camus lived and wrote in the same "world" and functioned in a very similar "champ intellectuel"; but his response was considerably different. It is to him that we must turn for an example of genuine independence, of a willingness to risk unpopularity for principle. True, he refused to alienate himself totally from the community from which he came and, in allying himself with its enemies, to wash his hands of responsibility for its fate; but he knew very well that in doing so he was in danger of losing the prestige he had acquired in the "world" of French cultural life. At the same time, as Walzer points out, he also refused to accept the values of the *pied noir* community so far as they conflicted with his conception of justice. As a result, he alienated everybody, and stood truly alone at the end of his life in defense of what he believed to be *both* love and justice. This required more courage than Sartre ever exhibited, since he never "broke" with anything that would endanger his influence, or whose abandonment caused him the slightest inner struggle.

These remarks, I hope, are amply clear, and in no way meant as criticisms of Walzer's admirably sensitive reevaluation, with whose conclusions I am in thorough sympathy. But they are suggestions for extending even further his defense of Camus, and refusing to accept the traditional image of him, largely established by his enemies, within whose boundaries Walzer still stakes out his vindication.□

Lionel Abel

Much of what Michael Walzer has to say about Albert Camus in *Commitment & Social Criticism: Camus's Algerian War*, in the Fall 1984 *Dissent*, is true and unexceptionable. All the same, Walzer's emphases seem to me to be off key, and this for two reasons: (1) Walzer's characterization of Camus seems to me wrong (apparently, he never knew Camus personally), and (2) I am unable to determine what Walzer means by "the democratic left" for which, he says, Camus has become an important myth.

Let's take Camus the individual, the person, first of all. Walzer writes: " . . . we know what he stood for: he was a man of principle, a 'just man.' " But was he? Now I knew Camus quite well, but I do not myself know what principles he stood for. Trying to give a political slant to the "principles" he supposes Camus to have had, Walzer writes in the very first sentence of his piece: "For men and women of the democratic left, Albert Camus is an exemplary figure." Now Camus may be an exemplary figure for "women of the democratic left," but he can hardly be that for *women*: too many women he was involved with either tried to commit suicide or considered committing suicide when Camus's interest in them turned elsewhere.

But didn't he stand for something? Not, I think, for a set of moral principles. Moral principles—and not just absolutist principles—Camus thought were absurd. What is true is that he was a *moraliste* in the French sense, but let's understand what that sense is. As understood by the French, a moralist is someone with a gift for insight into action, which he may show by crossing up our conventional moral expectations; he may do this by finding arguments for bad actions and strong objec-

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tions to good ones. Walzer also says of Camus that he was "a connected critic." The term is strange to me, but I suppose what Walzer means by it is that Camus connected various moral and political judgments into an ideological whole. And if this is what Walzer means, he is simply wrong. Camus was not an ideologist, any more than he was a just man.

About ideology: what could Camus's ideology, assuming he had one, have been? Here I would call Walzer's attention to a very interesting remark by Max Scheler that I found in Raymond Aron's *Mémoires*: "In the intellectual empyrean there are very few ideologies." Aron himself believes that there could be no ideology after Marxism. I should say, then, that there can be no "connected critics" or "connected criticism."

I have said that Camus was not a just man. In fact, he was something quite different. While not good, he was noble.

He reminds me of the French mathematician Evariste Galois, whom Edward Teller has called the greatest mathematician ever. Galois died at the age of 21, killed by his adversary in a duel. But on the night before the duel that was to end his life, he developed the Theory of Groups, which we still use, and he did this so as to leave something to humanity. Now was this use of his mind by Galois in the circumstance he was in particularly moral? I do not think so. I do not know anything about Galois's ethics, or his sense of the ethical. But what Galois did was certainly noble, and what Camus did in the French resistance was noble. He had the gift of looking at things "from above," as Stendhal said of Fabrice de Dongo. I am not saying that a man noble as Camus was does not belong in the democratic left—if I only knew what that was. I am saying that a man like him may very well find himself at different times being of service to other groups. A man who is noble is not one whose political position we can be certain of at all times.

ON THE ALGERIAN QUESTION, Camus happened to have been wrong, and it was a question about which it was not impossible to take a proper view. Walzer argues that Camus's position was somehow better than that of those who criticized it, but the only critics of it he mentions are Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre, and it is easy for Walzer to show what was wrong with their views. Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre were quite simply pro-Communist, and so they took the side of the FLN. De Beauvoir told Koestler: "If we have to choose between de Gaulle and the Communists, we'll take the Communists." But there were other critics of Camus's position on Algeria whom Walzer has ignored. For example, there was Raymond Aron, who was certainly not pro-Communist, even if not exactly a conservative. In his brochure, *Algeria and the Republic*, Aron wrote this against Camus: "Despite his will to justice and generosity M. Albert Camus does not rise above the attitude of a colonialist of good will." Against Camus's statement: " . . . as far as Algeria is concerned, national independence is surely an emotional formula. There has never been an Algerian nation"—Aron replied, "These Muslims have not been a nation in the past, but the youngest among them want to create a nation. An emotional demand? But of course, like all revolutionary demands."

In Stockholm in 1957, Camus said this about Algeria: "I believe in justice, but I will defend my mother before justice." While not exactly endorsing this remark, Walzer indicates that its meaning for him is " . . . the simple antinomy of justice and love. . . . " Now for Aron, Camus's remark was just meaningless. Aron writes:

> The Algerian revolt raised for all Frenchmen, but especially for the French of Algeria, a question of conscience. Why did Albert Camus reply to this question by noting his love for his mother? We would understand his having been torn between his attachment to Algeria and his desire for justice, if he had refused to take sides between the two camps. But the confrontation of "mother" and "justice" seems to me just a literary phrase and not the recognition of a conflict fraught with tragedy.

So Camus was simply wrong about Algeria. But now what about the *democratic left*, where, according to Walzer, he is remembered with honor? What is this democratic left? And what would Camus be asked to do for it if by some miracle he could be restored to life?

In France, would he be asked to vote to support President Mitterrand's new tax policies, borrowed from President Reagan? Or, in America, would it be to support Fritz Mondale against President Reagan in last November's election? But support for Fritz Mondale would mean support for Jesse Jackson, and his power in the Democratic party; and Jesse Jackson, in his turn, supports Sovietized Cuba, and the extension of Soviet power in Central America. How can we think of Camus supporting that? And in any case, what radical deed is there to be performed requiring a radical temperament like Camus's?

It is rather difficult these days even to *appear* to be a radical. I was on a program at Chautauqua along with I. F. Stone last August, and for two days at breakfast, lunch, and dinner we argued. But not over any policy that could really be called radical.

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And I noted that when he gave his prepared speech, I. F. Stone at one point defended President Reagan's personality, remarking that he was gracious to his subordinates and not mean-spirited as President Carter had been to his. Now I. F. Stone is an old-fashioned but authentic American radical, and if there were anything radical to be done, despite his failing health, I think he would be doing it. But in fact Mr. Stone has turned aside from politics. He is a wise man: he is studying Greek.□

I. F. Stone

Since Lionel Abel, in his comment, brought in the name of I.F. Stone, we thought it only fair to ask Mr. Stone if he had anything to say about that. Below is his reply. — Eds.

September 18, 1984

To the Editors of *Dissent*:

Thank you for letting me see Lionel Abel's attack on Michael Walzer. I enjoyed meeting Lionel Abel. He's gifted but he'd have a lot more fun if he weren't so crabby. He gives a wholly erroneous impression of my talk at Chatauqua, of my activities, and my life.

I did say that various people I trusted, including my good friend, the late Carey McWilliams, found Reagan and his wife Nancy engaging and gracious. I have never met them, and would rather not because I consider him a planetary pied piper leading the world to a nuclear confrontation. I have been saying so in political talks here and abroad (on London's Channel Four in August, among other places), and will do so again in preelection talks I have scheduled in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Washington, and Minneapolis.

My health is not failing. I am 76 and enjoying one of the happiest periods of my life. My wife of 55 years is my guardian angel. For me the study of ancient Greek is not an escape but an enrichment. I detest Plato politically, and agree with Aristotle that virtue is *political*, the exercise of those qualities that make it possible for man to live in peace with his fellows in communities and cities. And I believe the planet must become one *polis*, and humanity conscious of itself as one race if we are to survive. I am for the Mondale–Ferraro ticket and I don't believe any fight is over until the last blow or ballot.

With kind regards to my traducer, Lionel Abel,

I. F. Stone □

Michael Walzer Replies

I am grateful for Joseph Frank's comment and glad to hear that Camus is being read and honored again in France.

With Lionel Abel I seem to have a quarrel; he is obviously annoyed by my essay, but he is not annoyed in any coherent way, and I am not sure that I can develop a coherent argument against him. But there are a few points worth making.

(1) I did not know Camus personally. Nor did I know John Calvin, or Oliver Cromwell, or John Locke, or Jean-Jacques Rousseau, or Robespierre, or Clausewitz, or Marx, or General MacArthur, all of whom I have written about at one time or another. I am willing to learn from people with more intimate knowledge, but they have to be better teachers than Lionel Abel, with his sour mix

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of low gossip and *obiter dicta*. Yes, Camus in the Resistance was noble (did Abel know Camus in the Resistance?), but he was also, in his public life after the war, in the things he said, the commitments he made, the acts he performed, a good man.

(2) The phrase "connected critic" describes a writer who acknowledges and honors his ties to the people he criticizes. No reasonable reader could have missed the point; I was not saying anything about the critic's ideology.

(3) Raymond Aron indeed did well during the years of the Algerian war; his book *L'Algérie et la République* was both brave and (largely) true. But he had an easier time than Camus, for he had no ties to the *pied noir* community and no close feel for Algerian politics. When he opted for negotiations with the FLN and for Algerian independence, he did so convinced that arrangements could be worked out enabling the *pieds noirs* to remain in the country. Had Camus been similarly convinced, he might have opted for the same solution. But Camus saw more deeply into the "tragic" nature of the conflict.

(4) What annoys Abel most is my identification of Camus with the democratic left, which he professes to know nothing about. (He has only to remember. . . .) But surely that was Camus's own identification throughout his life—and never more strongly than when he was attacking French leftists for their Stalinist apologetics. I will quote just one example, from an essay published in 1957, in the aftermath of the Hungarian revolution:

> The untiring insistence upon freedom and truth [Camus wrote], the community of the worker and the intellectual . . . political democracy as a necessary and indispensable (though not sufficient) condition of economic democracy—this is what Budapest was defending. And in doing so, the great city in insurrection reminded Western Europe of its forgotten truth and greatness. It made short work of that odd feeling of inferiority that debilitates most of our intellectuals but that I, for one, refuse to feel.

And clearly, as we might remind Lionel Abel, there are right-wing as well as left-wing forms of debility. □

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Milovan Djilas

When the Russians Came

Or, Making a Bad Movie in Yugoslavia

With considerable help from Soviet troops as the war drew toward its end, the new [Titoist] regime found, in Belgrade, a permanent home at last. Our exhausted political leaders, famished for creature comforts, rushed to take advantage of the blessings conferred by a villa of one's own. Yet throughout the country Yugoslav blood was still being spilled—heroically, ruthlessly—in settling accounts with our conquerors or with each other. That was the moment—early 1945—chosen by Moscow to send a film crew to Belgrade to make a movie about the struggle of a "Yugoslav patriot." Its arrival was like a Mongol invasion—violent and irresistible.

Because he was to be the film's main hero, Tito was involved in the project early. But all the support work fell to Zogović and others in Agitprop: stage sets, staff, food, and lodging. Even though we were continually surprised by new demands from these Soviet filmmakers, organizational and material difficulties were overcome. There was no chance of our influencing the film's political or artistic content, in spite of all our ideological identity and Slavic brotherhood with the Soviets. Yet such kinship would be affirmed with special fervor at parties, for which the Soviet representatives displayed matchless talent and zeal. Nor could we manage to change the film's title—"In the Mountains of Yugoslavia"—to something more pithy and historically apt. The portals of the Soviet art bunker would swing ajar only to admit our knowledge of folklore. The result was a thoroughly commonplace, cliché-ridden peasant rebellion with virtuoso effects. Tito had a poor role—unenterprising, static. Mikhail Romm, the director, and Georgi Mdivani, the scriptwriter, found themselves in quite a different dilemma. How should they realize "artistically" the mandate they had been given, to show that in the Yugoslav uprising the Russians played a crucial role? For right up to the end of the war the Russians had been so far away that their agents could not even be brought in by plane. So a Russian escapee from German forced labor was invented, who had somehow become Tito's "good angel" adviser. That "creative" little joke was more Mdivani's than Romm's. Romm was jaded and withdrawn, while Mdivani—touted to us as a famous writer—was a vulgar, always tipsy chatterbox who in the wink of an eye could contrive whatever artistic solution was needed.

Recognizing the film's shallowness and derogatory nature, I made my feelings known to Tito and others. Our Soviet "experts," however, had ingratiated themselves by assigning Tito the hero's role. The actor impersonating him—famous, of course—fussed around Tito learning his gestures and mannerisms. Even Tito got fed up. Later, upon seeing the film, he raged with shame when he realized how subordinate his role had turned out to be, both in the plot and in history. Zogović, too, regarded it as a dead loss, especially artistically. Most other leading party comrades took the pragmatic view: our struggle was finally on film, which was better than nothing. It was no hit at the box office, and no *succès d'estime* either, despite our critics' sincere ideological and political identification with the Soviets.

But that was only the beginning. The Russian film crew was at work for several months poking here, there, and everywhere in Yugoslavia, mostly

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at our expense. Our own people were engaged to play the secondary roles and to provide technical services. The banquets that the crew arranged everywhere often turned into orgies. We all knew it, but looked the other way. Why, these were artists—Soviet comrades! Our own artists, not to mention party members, would never have dared to do such things, not in their wildest fantasies. I was present at one such banquet, in the villa at Dedinje assigned to the film crew, and only my restraint and Zogović's puritanism curbed the debauchery.

Both the carousing and the wandering around Yugoslavia, like the film itself—as our secret police discovered after the "bubble burst" in 1948—were designed to recruit Yugoslavs into Soviet intelligence and to infiltrate the art world. The revolution was still at a boil then and its doctrinaire asceticism still prevailed. Yielding to debauchery brought in its wake conflict with the reigning party morals and authority, thus creating a basis for recruitment. Large numbers of us were repelled by this "immorality" and "dissoluteness," but no one —not a soul—saw through the film's duplicity or discovered the ulterior motive of the orgies.

IDEOLOGICAL UNITY AND BROTHERHOOD made us leaders trusting and indulgent, despite our hard-won experience at the cost of so many lives, despite our power forged in fire and tempered in blood. We tried to understand those little "weaknesses," which we stifled in ourselves, tried to justify Soviet "deviations," which had been uprooted in ourselves.

Stalin had long since dealt with the likes of us in the U.S.S.R. He may not have been exactly dazzled by the ingenuity of his agents, but he surely must have had a good laugh at our revolutionary gullibility. Under the pretext of verisimilitude, the filmmakers assigned a part to Tigar, Tito's dog. To be sure, this was not the original animal—that one had met his end at the height of the Fifth Offensive. But he was the same breed, a German shepherd, and had even been captured from the Germans. Naturally, his master could hardly accompany the dog all over Yugoslavia just for the purpose of shooting a film. A most suitable man was picked to do this, Tito's personal bodyguard, whom Tigar knew perhaps even better than his master, since they spent most of the day together in front of Tito's living quarters. Thus it happened that B. and Tigar were attached to the film crew—B. as a kind of consultant into the bargain.

Tigar, luckily for him, was just a dog and unable to get embroiled in human and ideological difficulties. But B., who only yesterday had been a soldier and was now lapping up the sweets of victory, B., whose party puritanism and responsible position still kept those sweets from going to his head, was lured by three con artists into some orgy and then recruited into their intelligence service. An unprepossessing, myopic peasant, B. had made himself indispensable as Tito's bodyguard by virtue of his diligence. True, Tito's remorse and compassion for the sufferings of the Valjevo unit whose remnants, including B., had found refuge in Bosnia, possibly played a part in the relationship. Moreover, Tito always resisted change, both in his personal habits and in the personnel around him, so after the war B. continued to tend Tito's anterooms; he was a good coffeemaker and dutiful in all things.

Professionally, B. lagged behind his comrades in arms except in rank: overnight, he had been jumped to major. He remained directly under Tito and constantly by his side, if I recall, for about two years after the feud with the Soviets broke out. Upon his discovery and arrest, it became clear that B. had been depressed throughout that period. Everyone was shocked at the dangers to which Tito had been exposed, and Tito himself was exasperated—at the Soviets, at his own negligence, and at the disloyalty of a fellow soldier whom he himself had promoted. Why was no attempt made on Tito's life by Moscow, acting through B.? One can only guess. I imagine they were checked by B.'s own hesitancy, as he vacillated between his past and a present under the spell of pro-Soviet dogma.

THE MOTIVATION for those who joined the Soviet secret service—including B.—was the safeguarding of communism in Yugoslavia. Their more experienced control was needed. No doubt, this is where the moral disintegration of the personality began. But the conscience was locked in a dilemma, especially for participants in the war; for the "younger" and less "evolved," Yugoslav communism was identical with Soviet communism. B.'s conscience—like that of the vast majority (but not all) of the Partisans who declared for Stalin—was not, at least in the beginning, so alienated and hate-filled that Soviet intelligence could induce him to commit murder.

The Soviet filmmakers had added more than B. to their "cast." They had been preceded by a Yugoslav emigrant named S., who had arrived from the U.S.S.R. and forced himself on the director of a new film enterprise in the capacity of "expert." Meddlesome, greedy, and dissolute, he was removed before the confrontation began, at which point he came out for Stalin. Later he was exposed as a spy. S. served mainly as an intermedi-

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ary between Moscow and us on film questions. In 1946, he submitted the draft of a Soviet-Yugoslav agreement for film collaboration to Vladislav Ribnikar, who directed cultural affairs for the federal government. Mild and cooperative though he was, Ribnikar noticed something inappropriate in the agreement and, since it touched on ideology, consulted with me in Agitprop. The agreement would have crippled our Yugoslav film industry, which our filmmakers were developing from scratch. According to the terms, Soviet films were to monopolize the Yugoslav market, and the most unfavorable, most humiliating conditions for us were set. I consulted with Kardelj and notified Tito. Both agreed with my assessment but argued that a rift had to be avoided and compromise solutions sought. I dictated those solutions, in negotiations with Soviet embassy employees and S., who quickly backed down, obviously annoyed. But enough subservience remained in the revised agreement, approved by Tito and Kardelj and accepted by the Soviets, to make us feel the sting of shame, until our later resistance rendered that agreement obsolete. □

Lucy Komisar

Campesino Land Invasions in Honduras

La Paz, July 1984

This town belongs to Roberto Suazo Cordova, the president of Honduras. The streets of La Paz are paved, though people in neighboring towns put up with rocks and ruts in dry weather and mud in the rainy season. The Suazo family owns most of the farm land around La Paz, and for six years, 40 peasants have squatted on 122 acres belonging to Anarda Cervantes Viuda de Suazo, the president's sister-in-law, demanding that it be turned over to them under the agrarian reform law. "We were thrown out by the landowner twice and twice by the army," declared Elvia Alvarado, an organizer for the National Union of Campesinos (UNC). "We always return."

Thirty members of the First of May UNC cooperative sat under an open wood shelter on boxes and rough-plank benches, to talk about their situation. Most of them were men, from 20 to 76. Most had lined, brown faces shaded with straw hats and wore torn shirts and dusty black boots. Several had machetes hanging from their belts.

The campesinos come daily to work the plots they have planted with corn, beans, tomatoes, chile, onions, watermelon, and yucca. The landowner's forces and the army have repeatedly destroyed their plots and few machines. "It's a constant war," said one. "But we'd rather die from a bullet than of hunger." Before, they had worked irregularly as farm laborers for $1.50 or $2 a day. They live in nearby villages in primitive shacks made of bits of wood, plastic, and palm leaves. They can't bring their families to the land because it is plagued by mosquitoes that carry malaria. "Do you have electricity?" They laughed. "Running water?" A peasant joked, "Yes, the river." Stomach disorders and diarrhea are a constant problem, especially among children, because the water is impure. Out of 30, only two have not lost children to disease.

Most of the campesinos are illiterate. "We can't alternate the seven directors of the cooperative, because the rest can't read or write," explained Elvia Alvarado. They don't have the credit to rent oxen; so they plow their fields with the metal-tipped wood sticks that farmers used a thousand years ago. "At least we have corn now," said one. In a good year, they can earn $200 from the crops.

The land occupation of the First of May cooperative is part of a movement that began here 20 years ago. In 1984, the invasions have increased. Several thousand peasants, members of three national campesino unions, have moved onto more than 50 properties, protesting the failure of the National Agrarian Reform Institute (INA) to enforce the land reform law and demanding title to the lands they occupy.

THE FIRST AGRARIAN REFORM LAW in Honduras was passed in 1962, but it was soon blocked by the military. In 1972, a campesino march in the capital was followed by a military coup against the civilian government, "to avoid chaos." The peasants, a substantial sector of the population, supported the coup. They were rewarded with a new land reform law in 1974. At that time it was estimated that 300,000 peasant families in this nation of 4 million didn't have land, though many squatted on national land and simply lacked title.

Under the statute, land could be expropriated

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for peasants if the owner didn't have clear title, had more than a certain amount of land, depending on the fertility of the region and the presence of state irrigation, and if the land was not fulfilling its potential. Campesinos were required to file petitions for land with INA. This worked for a while, but then the system broke down. INA ran out of easy land to expropriate and didn't dare touch the powerful and the military, many of whom had staked out national land to which they had no title.

A good part of the millions of dollars spent on the programs was stolen by the people running them, with the consent of some of the peasant leaders. The end of that period of reform is marked by the Olancho Massacre of 1975, when thugs hired by a landowner killed 11 people, including an American and a Colombian priest, who were marching to protest INA's failure for 14 months to act on a petition for expropriation.

After the election of the current civilian government in 1981, the land reform started up again. But since 1982, only 11,330 families have received land —125,000 acres—out of an estimated 150,000 families that need it. The program is handicapped by lack of funds and political will, by refusal to touch the influential and powerful, and by incompetence and corruption.

• Campesinos tired of INA's failure to act on their petitions began to invade land in the 1960s. In the beginning there was a climate of greater liberty, and the government did not repress the peasant organizations. That has changed. In the standard scenario, the owner gets the security forces or his own paramilitary to throw the peasants out. At least four peasants were shot to death by landlords in 1984, and several hundred have been jailed.

Eventually, INA comes in and tries to negotiate. Ubodoro Arriaga Iraheta, until recently the director of INA and now the president's top adviser, acknowledged that most of the land distributed by his agency was first taken by occupations. Publicly he said the land invasions were illegal and that he would call on security forces to eject the invaders. Privately he admitted, "The campesinos use invasions as workers use a strike. They are right. The lands that are given are almost always given to peasants who carry out invasions."

Now land occupations are increasing. The campesinos are pressuring harder since the ouster of General Gustavo Alvarez Martinez as head of the armed forces in March 1984. In addition to land occupations, 350 families in Yoro, in the north, took over a municipal hall demanding communal land that had been appropriated by a big landowner, and over 300 peasants from the major campesino unions occupied an INA regional office, calling for the firing of the regional director. He was transferred.

• Marcial Caballero, head of the UNC, says the agrarian reform is "demagoguery, to deceive the peasants to get votes." He says officials have used it to line their own pockets. "They're forcing us to go to the mountains," he once said to General Alvarez. "Surely, we're not guerrillas. But if our people keep on being beaten and jailed, they're leaving us just one way."

• Augusto Suarez, deputy director of INA from 1982 until April 1983, told me that the pressure of the military and the wealthy is preventing the reform law's application, and that the government gave neither money nor political support to the program and has cut INA's budget. In fact, the biggest beneficiary of the program has been a giant multinational: the New York-based United Brands. It is the former United Fruit, which changed its name after the "Bananagate" bribery scandal of the '70s. In 1979, United Brands returned national land to INA, receiving $200,000 in compensation for improvements it had made. The minister of natural resources, Rafael Leonardo Callejas, said he wanted the land for a livestock program, and INA transferred it to his agency. Callejas turned around and sold it to Progasa, a private cattle company controlled by United Brands, for $221,500, with a down payment of $50,000 and the rest to be paid in 20 years at 3 percent. The property, I was told, was worth over $1 million, and the sale was illegal. It should have been used for state purposes. But it was given away as a gift. And last June, 33 peasant families were thrown off 170 acres of United Brand's land they had occupied and cultivated for two years. The company sent cattle to trample their crops.

Suarez told me that Standard Fruit, the other multinational banana company, won't even talk about land reform. "It threatens to move out of the country." He says another handicap for the program is the policy of the United States, the country's main lender, which does not show here the same enthusiasm it has for land reform in El Salvador. He said the U.S. distrusts the program because grants of land are made to groups, and not to individuals. And a major obstacle is U.S. opposition to subsidizing interest rates on loans to small farmers. "If you give peasants loans and charge 16 percent, these groups will never make it," he said.

Suarez noted that the U.S. showed a different attitude about government aid to private groups

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when a strong wind destroyed a United Brands plantation in 1983. "Ambassador [John Dimitri] Negroponte pressured the government to give the company fiscal incentives to plant what was lost," he said, noting that Negroponte had personally attended meetings on the matter. □

D. G. Green

Toy Soldiers and Wargames

I've always been a collector, and when I was a kid I had what was undoubtedly the best collection of toy soldiers in the neighborhood. Boxes and boxes of them, occupying a sizable part of the basement. It was my favorite pastime to spend an afternoon, a day, a weekend down in the basement, away from light, air, and healthful exercise, staging miniature wars. Often enough, one or another friend would join my basement sessions, but just as often I would be alone.

The major reason for going it alone was that even the best of friends couldn't be trusted to follow the rules. The "rules," of course, were unspoken—a shared sense of what was proper play. For instance, it was an unbreakable rule that the "good guys" (most often Americans) couldn't win too easily—they must first be repulsed with heavy losses, then return to win the day in a struggle that would leave almost every soldier on both sides dead.

My father gave me a bushel basket full of wood scraps to use in my wars, and I developed two types of construction. The first, regular and carefully laid out, resembled a fort; the second a jumble of rubble. Both included cubbyholes for the enemy (who was always the defender: another rule) to hide in. By the end of the battle, the first construction would usually be reduced to the second. Another favorite battle took place under the workbench, where the lumber was stacked. There the enemy soldiers would dig in, defending themselves against amphibious assault from the good guys, who would wade ashore from the gray-painted concrete sea. This scenario, in imitation of many Pacific battles, had a name: Bloody Cove.

Over the years I acquired a number of different sizes and types of soldiers. My favorites were a series about two and a half inches high in two colors: the familiar U.S. Army olive green—the good guys—and a sand color, which, if it represented any particular nationality, was taken to be Japanese. Otherwise, the figures were indistinguishable. Each side had men firing standing, men firing kneeling, men firing prone, men running, men with bazookas and machine guns, men throwing grenades, and (anachronistically) men bayoneting. In contrast to real armies, there were no slackers.

With the figures came accessories: sandbag emplacements, simulated ruins, pontoon bridges, pillboxes, bombed-out buildings, palm trees, barbed wire, and of course tanks, jeeps, and other vehicles, on a much smaller scale than the figures. The level of detail was generally quite good: the pillboxes were pockmarked from shell hits and the weapons were authentic. Most of my soldiers were armed with the 7.62 mm rifle popular with NATO in the '50s; earlier editions had the World War II M–1.

Obviously, we didn't create our styles of play in a vacuum; they were drawn from the culture around us, from movies, TV, and comic books. One of the ways a culture reproduces itself is by preparing its young men for war, and in a sense our culture was doing that for us. The difficulty lies in disentangling what our culture was teaching us (or thought it was teaching us) from what we taught ourselves —that is, to what extent our play-acting helped us deal with aggressive impulses universal to what (for lack of a better term) we call "human nature." This may be a bad way of formulating the distinction, for attempts to say anything useful about human nature seem doomed in advance. Nevertheless, I think it helpful to keep some distance between a late 20th-century way of playing with toy soldiers and a broader sense of playing at war that runs throughout Western culture.

We learned, from our two-color scheme, that there is an enemy, and that the enemy is easily defined. An opposite lesson was concealed in those figures, which we did not or could not draw: that there was no real difference between the two sides. But to us the color difference was real.

I am not suggesting that it was color that was important, of course. We came from white middle-class suburbs and were taught to look down on overt racism. It was difference that counted. Any American could easily be told apart from any enemy, and those distinctions could never be blurred.

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At least one source of this perception is easy to see. Those were the Eisenhower–Kennedy years, when the Cold War was in full swing, and the maps in our elementary-school readers, if they didn't always picture the "Free World" as pristine white, always pictured the "Communist Bloc" as bloody red. Before that, there were Nazis and Japanese. That struggle, and the current one, were for control of the world; no lesser conflict was possible.

We learned that Americans always win. It was almost as important, however, that it be a tough fight. The very structure of our play reflected this. On occasion, a small American force would be overwhelmed by the enemy (fighting to the last man, of course), but that was not the end of the play; the Americans must always return and conquer. No *Bataan* without a *Back to Bataan.*

This, of course, *was* history as we were taught it. Americans started their wars as plucky underdogs who managed in the end to overwhelm enemies foreign and, by implication, domestic. It was an article of faith, of the secular religion, more reassuring than the nonsecular because demonstrably true.

We learned that war is anonymous. In the 20th century this may seem too obvious to require comment, but it contradicted the lessons taught in the popular media, where individual heroism was all. But with heroes goes some personal quality (Achilles' stubbornness or Hector's domesticity), and the interchangeability of our plastic warriors was hard to overcome. One way out was arbitrarily to designate one of our side as the more-or-less official hero; in true *Sgt. Rock* fashion, he would take out a large number of the enemy singlehandedly. But, as I recall, this was felt to be an evasion; teamwork was more important. Here, I think, is the strongest contrast to the type of "playing soldier" that kids do in groups, where everyone has a part and has to be accounted for. Our solitary or dual (at most triple) generalship accustomed us to wastage.

Given these elements, it is not surprising our battles were carried out at a level of carnage no real army could possibly sustain. For there were no

Jan Rosenberg

Commentary Discovers a Plot . . .

Just when you thought you'd heard too many complex arguments about "comparable worth," Michael Levin, *Commentary*'s antifeminist-in-residence, comes along to simplify matters. It's all a plot to destroy capitalism and establish socialism (Michael Levin, "Comparable Worth: The Feminist Road to Socialism," *Commentary*, September 1984).

Here Levin begins with the standard criticisms of comparable worth, opening with the claim that it is a frontal assault on the "free market," different from such earlier measures as the minimum wage and banking regulations seeking to "preserve the free market against its own excesses." One of these "excesses," as Mr. Levin puts it, is its tendency, in the United States, to discriminate on the basis of ascribed characteristics like sex and race.

Levin points out that the pivotal notion of a "just price"—a fair measure of the value of specific jobs—has long eluded political economists and philosophers and is not likely to yield to a new band of job-evaluation experts. He warns of the meritocratic assumptions and credentialist implications of comparable worth. And he observes that advocates of comparable worth use an extremely broad, vague, and tautological definition of discrimination. It includes the portion of the wage gap (the difference between the average wages for men and for women) that can't be explained by particular variables, such as education, labor-force participation and experience.

In the beginning there is the wage gap, the infamous merely 59 percent that women earn of men's total wages. Then one quantifies variables thought to cause the difference (education and so forth) between women's and men's wages. Whatever is left (usually about 20 to 30 percent of the gap) is called discrimination, thus defining out of existence the traditional family values that surely propelled women into predominantly female jobs even though they paid poorly.

What, then, about the compelling conservative claim that many women traditionally value family over work, particularly while their children are young, and choose relatively low-paying jobs that allow easy exit and reentry, good hours (compatible with family responsibilities), and convenient locations?

The structures of male and female work and wages have, so far, more closely reflected past social norms and family-work relationships; but today many women (from those living alone to those heading their own families or co-heading

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morale problems; they all did what they were supposed to do, which was fight (no rear echelon either), and the fighting was not felt to be accurate unless they dropped like flies.

Here I must pose a question I can't answer. Toy soldiers are hardly a product of the 20th century; any reader of Victorian literature will have encountered them many times. Did earlier cultures conduct their play with such ferocity? I doubt the distinction between winner and loser (good guys and bad guys) was any less clear to the Victorians. And there was always the Light Brigade to serve as a spectacular example of carnage. Yet I can't help thinking that the peculiarly intense nature of modern warfare pointed us in the direction of having every war become a war of extermination. No prisoners.

The complex relation between play and violence is one I am not equipped to untangle. But World War II was with us throughout our childhood; it was the war our fathers fought in, the war that held our imaginations. Cultural memories of Tarawa and the Bulge were preserved in our play; perhaps some of their real-life brutality was transferred to my basement floor.

Many parents I know prefer to buy their sons dolls rather than toy soldiers, toy guns, or any accessory of pretend violence. If children need to sublimate their violent side through violent play, this will presumably prove futile. Yet it's a worthy experiment; girls are socialized quite differently, and seem to grow up with almost no interest in things military, which I can't help but feel is an advance. I would be very curious to know whether distorted reflections of Vietnam are preserved in our children's play; perhaps those plastic palm trees are now part of a metaphorical Pleiku instead of Iwo Jima.

ABOUT THE TIME that toy soldiers started to decline in importance for me, wargames came along. Until the late '60s, all wargames were manufactured by a single company—Avalon Hill of Baltimore—but in the '70s a flood of new games and companies (some

families with partners) suffer severely from the continuation of these patterns. Levin refers to "market wages" as "the wages they [workers] all agree to accept." Exactly . . . and many women are increasingly reluctant to accept wages they have come to see as inadequate and unfair, whatever the historic-cultural patterns in which they were once embedded.

But we still have to come to Levin's and *Commentary*'s fatal blow against comparable worth. Wage differentials, you see, are rooted in biology! The real reason so many women continue to enter distinctly female, low-wage jobs is their genetic inheritance, Levin warns. If women would only acknowledge the basic differences between the sexes, particularly ". . . the male's amply documented greater innate competitiveness, his tendency to do whatever is necessary to ascend hierarchies, including the hierarchies of modern business organizations," they could graciously accept the inevitability of the wage gap!

Levin seems to live entirely in a world of carefully screened ideologies and assumes the rest of us are similarly situated. His article mentions only once the actual wages earned by real men and women in specific jobs, and it never mentions the number of women now heading their own households. Yet these facts—not abstract, unprovable arguments about biology—underlie the day-to-day realities that fire the movement toward comparable worth. According to Levin, it is not a low wage (or even a sense of "relative deprivation") that fans these flames. It is, rather, "this rage at all difference in the basic social role of the sexes [that] underlies the campaign for comparable worth." This must come as a big surprise to the female and male trade unionists who have seized on it as a promising strategy to raise the low levels of women's wages.

One could argue more persuasively that comparable worth grew out of the recognition that differences in social and work roles are as clear now as ever and not at all likely to disappear. "Equal pay for equal work," the forerunner of comparable worth, was built on the now discredited assumption that male/female differences in regard to work were on the verge of extinction and that women would quickly move into previously all-male jobs, once overt, intentional discrimination vanished. Comparable worth rests instead on the recognition that for many reasons women and men will continue to do different kinds of work to support their families.

Michael Levin seems to believe that he's fighting a desperate struggle to halt perfidious schemes to undermine American capitalism. In actuality, he provides a justification for continuing to underpay the women of the "silent majority" *Commentary* claims to speak for. □

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rather fly-by-night) inundated the market; now hundreds of these games are available.

For readers who have never seen a wargame, I will describe a typical product (from Simulations Publications, Inc.) called *Berlin '85: The Enemy at the Gates*. The game simulates a Warsaw Pact attack on West Berlin. It is played on a paper mapboard ruled hexagonally to regulate movement. The playing pieces are small cardboard squares, color-coded by nationality. The amount of detail printed on map and counters would be intimidating to a novice; the rules are 12 dense pages long. According to the publisher's own rating, *Berlin '85*'s complexity is "moderate (6.7). For purposes of comparison, the game of *Monopoly* is considered to have a complexity rating of 2.34."

After ten years of growth in the wargame industry, it's safe to say there's no major battle ancient or modern that hasn't received its wargame treatment. Much effort goes into designing new game systems; there always seems to be room for one more treatment of an old favorite. Games on the Bulge, for instance, range from a small affair that uses a hundred pieces and can be played in an hour or two, to a dinosaur with four large maps and several thousand pieces that requires hundreds of hours of individual or team play.

THE PECULIARLY ABSORBING QUALITY of games is their ability to destroy our ordinary sense of time and impose their own: a kind of self-transcendence, more reliable than sex because undiminished by age or familiarity (as any chess, bridge, or poker fanatic knows). Wargames such as the last one I described have the capability of annihilating entire weekends for groups of people, a quality matched perhaps only by such legendary shipboard poker games as the ones in which Richard Nixon won his political grubstake.

The difference between wargames and other games is that they are historical (or, as in our first example, pseudohistorical). A great deal of research goes into each and a constant debate rages between those who demand historical accuracy (which can lead to paralyzing detail) and those who demand playability (which can distort the situation the game claims to represent). Unlike most other games where the rules are quickly learned and the players concentrate on subtleties and refinements, wargames demand constant attention to detail. Lately some games have even attempted to reproduce the "fog of war" by denying the player information about his own side.

Since the conflict between historical accuracy and playability suggests that wargames might serve more than one function, we're entitled to ask: what do we learn from them? Chess, for instance, although in its origins a "wargame," teaches no lessons beyond its own framework. Yet wargames claim to represent history, and some games attempt to apply the industry's term "conflict stimulation" to situations other than war: SPI's *Conquistador*, for instance, deals with the European settlement of the Americas.

The easy answer to the question, "What of historical value do we learn from wargames?" is: nothing. Surely, how a war started and what resulted are more important than how it was fought. Yet in essence wargames pose what historians call "contrafactual" and we call "what-if" propositions. Historians generally scorn what-ifs as bad methodology, but it seems to me that what-ifs are the basis of historical curiosity. Wargames, even on the "buff" level that can be so irritating to outsiders (what *would* have happened if Lew Wallace's brigade had shown up when it was supposed to?), thus support a healthy curiosity that can lead to the study of history.

If that is a good side effect of playing wargames (although many gamers seem as mired in buffism as the Wehrmacht was in Russian mud), what of the bad? The little cardboard squares represent people, abstracted and moved about the map without compunction, by the instrumental logic of military necessity. This activity, of course, is not dissimilar to that of Pentagon planners; indeed, wargame companies have developed as a profitable sideline the designing of simulations for the military. Doubly profitable in some instances, for a good military design can be adapted to a good commercial design. Wargames are thus used as preparation for "real" war. This further blurs the distinction between game as game and game as tool —realism vs. playability in a new light.

I'M DRAWN TO THE QUESTION I can not answer—the connection between play and violence. Since no one is hurt in paper wars, what about the players? Are they more militaristic, less sensitive to violence than other highly educated males (as gamers tend to be)? Judging from the gamers I have known, I would say not. In which case it seems that objections to wargames center around their symbolism —that to simulate the bane of human existence for pleasure and a little instruction is at least in bad taste and perhaps immoral. Even those for whom the battle of Megiddo is far enough removed to be inured to the thought of real swords slashing real

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William Adams

Russian Invaders, American Heroes

When I was growing up in a small town outside of Detroit, I spent the usual amount of time playing war games. The one I remember best was a non-nuclear, domestic version of an imaginary "World War III," pitting me and my friends against an invading army of Russian soldiers. Beneath the canopy of elms and maples that lined our street, we took on the Russians with stones, hunting rifles, and the symbolism the epoch provided. I was part of a guerrilla band of children, striking the enemy without warning from bedroom turrets, then miraculously slipping away into the shelter of garages, backyard bushes, and fence lines.

John Milius has now made something very much like this fantasy into the film *Red Dawn.* It is a bad film in most respects, made all the worse by the fanatically reactionary nature of its politics. Still, it is an interesting and perhaps even an important film, for it attempts to tap directly into the cold-war nerve of American politics.

Red Dawn opens on an early morning in Calumet, a small town in the northern Colorado plains. The film's heroes, all high school students, are on their way to class. Moments later, in the midst of a history lecture on Genghis Khan, parachutes blossom over Calumet High. Thinking they are American troops blown off course, the black history teacher goes outside to see, and is promptly gunned down by automatic-rifle fire.

Calumet erupts into madness. Troops land everywhere, supported by armored cars, tanks, and jet fighters. Jed Eckert, former football star and recent graduate of Calumet High, races back to the school to retrieve his brother, Matt, and friends. Miraculously, they escape the closing ring of Russian and Cuban troops and, after loading Jed's pickup with Coke, Campbell's soup, and guns, they flee to the mountains where they intend to wait out the war.

Jed and Matt Eckert, brought up as hunters, become the natural leaders of this small band. The group hangs on for weeks, learning to provide for itself. But as time goes by, curiosity and loneliness undermine their determination. They return to town, and what they find there is Milius's version of *1984*: a full-blown occupation, run by the KGB and a Cuban colonel, complete with posters of Lenin on the walls and reeducation camps. Jed and Matt discover that their father has been sent to a detention pen at the Calumet drive-in theater. In a bizarre and gruesome scene they meet him across a barbed-wire fence, surrounded by the screams of the victims of torture. Certain of his own death at the hands of his torturers, he tells his boys to flee immediately and then, in one last, anguished appeal, to avenge his death.

The boys do flee, but with a different purpose in mind. On a chance encounter with three Soviet soldiers in the mountains, they become adult guerrillas. Not only are they capable of violence; they like it.

This begins a cycle of guerrilla actions and retaliatory executions by the Soviet forces, a spiral of violence that occupies the greater part of the film. Joined by a downed American pilot, the group becomes (in two months) a proficient terrorist group, carrying out desper-

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ate raids on the Soviet oppressors. The band calls itself the "Wolverines," the symbol of the Calumet high school teams. By the film's end, the "Wolverines" have become an avenging band of child warriors that obsesses the Soviet and Cuban commanders and demoralizes their troops.

If writers John Milius and Kevin Reynolds had trouble getting into this remarkably unlikely story, they had even more trouble getting out. How does one end a protracted guerrilla war starring adolescents? What happens when the child warriors grow up? The fact is, they can't grow up, and Milius does not let them. Tired of fooling around, the enemy's sector commander, a Cuban colonel, brings in some special forces from the outside, which soon catch up with the rebels and kill half of them. Down to only four members, the band decides to call it quits, with two heading for freedom in the unoccupied zone, and Jed and Matt remaining behind because they are just too "burned out" to go on fighting or, presumably, living. They plan a massive diversion for their escaping counterparts, an attack on the sector headquarters in Calumet. After killing nearly everyone in sight, they too are killed by the Soviet Special Forces commander. In the penultimate scene, Jed, mortally wounded, carries his dead brother Matt to the park where they played as kids. Meanwhile, Erica and Danny, the lone survivors, make it to "Free America," with Danny whispering, "We're free now."

II

FILMS AS EXPLICITLY POLITICAL as *Red Dawn* are unusual, to say the least. Given the politics the film expresses, it is not surprising that Milius has received much attention (and criticism) for his rather hysterical portrait of the international situation in general, and Soviet-American relations in particular.

Milius's story is indeed reactionary in its implications. Still, it is hard to take the film's explicit politics seriously. I am not certain how one measures such things, but I doubt that many people will be captivated by the historical scenario conjured up in *Red Dawn*—partly because the film is poorly written, directed, and acted. I also suspect that its scenario is too extreme. Whatever bad end we are to come to at the hands of the Soviets, most people, I think, don't believe it will be this one.

The film could have been powerful, and disturbing. This potential is evident in its subtext. By design or accident, in *Red Dawn* Milius exposes, briefly and in a very confusing way, a potent vein of imagery that is part of the symbolic terrain of our political culture. Although it is not worth getting worked up over his political vision, it is worth paying attention to, and perhaps worrying a little about, the political symbolism he attempts to tap.

That Milius is working with symbols is clear in the film's opening moments, which consist of evocative, early-morning shots of Calumet: white, wood-frame houses; streets lined with big trees, now losing their last leaves; main street and the town square; people on their way to school and work. Though it is set in Colorado, Calumet might be Anytown U.S.A. This iconic representation of the small American town is the setting, as Ronald Reagan's "biographical" film at the Republican convention reminded us, of a classically American vision of order and virtue.

Into this bastion of rectitude descends the quintessential Communist "other," a familiar enough theme. But an even deeper and less precise xenophobia surfaces here. It is expressed by the fantasy of domination and rebellion, and the more or less constant juxtaposition of Calumet's familiar landscape with the outside world of foreign invaders: Cubans, Nicaraguans, Salvadorans and, of course, the Russians. At times the mood of the film is very much like the Martian pictures of the 1950s and '60s, in which aliens take up residence in the neighborhood, and for which *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* was in some sense the prototype.

Milius lets us in once again on that nagging and deeply rooted fear, so curious in the context of American history, of the world outside the tidy boundaries of Calumet. Clearly, those boundaries are cultural, and also political. The Cuban and Soviet troops occupying Calumet not only speak a different language, they also belong to a different political universe. Under their occupation, Calumet becomes a demented dreamscape, a nightmare world where the drive-in theater is transformed into a place

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of torture and death, and where KGB agents prowl about Main Street looking for teenagers to interrogate.

If this is what life has suddenly become, who will survive and what public values will they be able to draw upon? On the level of symbolism and subtext, *Red Dawn* attempts to answer this question. Milius creates a sort of catalogue of essential American virtues, virtues that stand out in this fantasy of domination and rebellion. Not surprisingly, they all revolve around a single figure, represented by Jed, the former high school quarterback who takes the lead soon after the story begins. In Milius's vision, what grounds the happy serenity of cold, autumnal mornings in small-town America is masculine toughness, the capacity to endure, and to inflict, punishment. *Red Dawn* invokes a warrior ethic where physical prowess and courage become the principal social virtues and the precondition for a return to normal life in Calumet.

This message is hammered in relentlessly throughout the film. We learn that Jed is named after Jedidiah Smith, legendary American hunter—as the boys bend down to gut a deer. Jed and his brother Matt tell Robert, a novice hunter, that he must drink the blood of his first kill. "You have to drink the spirit of the deer," Jed and Matt explain, an act, they promise, that will forever change him. The promise is portentous, for later in the film Robert becomes the most committed and lustful killer of all.

This tangle of associations of masculinity with hunting, violence, blood-letting, and spirituality is very far from original. Still it is potent stuff, as Michael Cimino discovered in *The Deer Hunter*. But where Cimino sets Robert De Niro apart from his community through his nearly mystical relationship with the deer and the hunt, Milius suggests that Jed's prowess as a hunter is somehow the root of community, emblematic of the masculine toughness that cements the citizens of Calumet to one another and to their traditions of freedom. Beneath the surface of civility, the real democratic citizen is a hard-ass, readied by his experiences of nature and violence to defend his home and town against all who threaten them.

In Jed's character, this masculine toughness is bound up with other formative experiences. Toughness is something that men teach to boys, and *Red Dawn* is loaded with images of fathers instructing sons in the arts of being tough. "I was hard on you boys growing up," Tom Eckert says to his sons over the fence of the drive-in turned prison camp, "but you can see now why I was." Similarly, Jed's success as a military leader is tied to his prowess as a football player and hunter, and his training in the schools of nature, athletics, and stern parental guidance.

Milius thus appeals to the same cultural symbolism used by Peter Weir in *Gallipoli*, only he reverses it. In the final moments of the battle at *Gallipoli*, the boy athlete turned soldier recalls the words of his tough grandfather and trainer. "What are your feet? Springs. What are your legs? Steel." The phrase that links the athlete to the soldier, and the combativeness of sports to real combat, is spoken just before the hero vaults out of the trench to a certain and absurd death. But for Milius the implication is quite the opposite. Not only does the skill of warfare realize the prowess of the hunter and the athlete; it promises to save the community as well.

Of course, it does not save the hero himself or his nearly equal brother. Perhaps this is Milius's way of complicating a simplistic scenario. Consumed by the violence of the guerrilla war, Jed and Matt commit a kind of suicide by returning to Calumet for one final, glorious adventure. But Milius concludes this episode in a way that extinguishes any possible moral ambiguity. Mortally wounded, Jed and Matt return to the park their father brought them to as children. At the scene of early lessons in toughness, Jed, embracing his dead brother, falls into hallucinated conversation with their dead father. It is thus in death that the circuit of father and sons, and the formative lessons of childhood, are completed.

III

AS A PIECE OF FILMMAKING, *Red Dawn* bears no comparison with such films as *Gallipoli* and *The Deer Hunter*. But Milius does what Cimino and Weir did not do: he ties a particular

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network of symbolism to an extremely conservative political vision. This, I think, makes the film a bit more significant than merely a bungled attempt at cold-war ideology, though it is that, too.

We recognize Milius's failure because we know the story so well; the symbolism that *Red Dawn* works on belongs not to its writers but to the culture as a whole. And what the film does get right is that this particular arc of symbolism has been more often tied to a heroic view of war than to an antiwar view, to the politics of Milius rather than the politics of either Weir or Cimino.

How much does the symbolism of political culture matter? I think it matters a great deal. We always, all of us, are made to think about the world in terms of something, by means of something. Our perceptions and judgments are always, inevitably, linked to the narratives, images, and symbols provided for us by our political culture, by a common political language and imagination. It is that stream of collective imagination and perception that *Red Dawn* dips into and follows to its grim conclusion.

After Vietnam it is hard to believe that a film of this sort—or, more accurately, the symbolic network it tries to reclaim—is a true reflection of who we are. Surely, the Vietnam experience has altered our political culture in certain ways; it has become one of the stories that can tell us who we are and what we think. Still, we should remember that many of the people who flew off to fight Communists in Vietnam justified their actions in terms of some of the potent cultural symbolism that Milius tries to master in *Red Dawn*.

But what does this attempt mean now, nearly 15 years after such imagery seemed to have been so thoroughly discredited? It means, I think, that the old, symbolic substance of our political culture has enormous resilience; that it is still deeply rooted and formative, beyond any one event, no matter how traumatic and apparently irreversible. It is as though our old political-cultural apparatus were some vast machine that cannot be turned off. It keeps on spinning out the same mythical and symbolic narratives. In spite of its artistic failure, *Red Dawn* reminds us that a particular pattern of political symbolism is not the product of a limited historical epoch called the cold war; it is in fact buried deeper in the culture, a recurrent dream from which we cannot entirely awake. □

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Irv Garfinkel

Race, Culture, & Discrimination

THE ECONOMICS AND POLITICS OF RACE: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE, by Thomas Sowell. New York: William Morrow. 312 pp. $15.95.

Thomas Sowell is a very good storyteller. But *The Economics and Politics of Race: An International Perspective* is a poor book. It has the same strengths and weaknesses as the other three of his books I have read (*Essays and Data on American Ethnic Groups*, 1978; *Markets and Minorities*, 1981, and *Ethnic America*, 1981). They tell provocative and lively stories about minority immigrant groups and pull together an array of knowledge. They are well written, and parts are insightful.

All these books indeed have made me angry, made me think, and taught me something. Yet I've come away from each convinced that Tom Sowell is at best a careless scholar. Though his books have more footnotes than manuscripts written by lawyers—this one has 1,565—he often neglects references to evidence well known to scholars in his field that contradict his arguments. His major points are at best misleading and often wrong. Some of the strengths and nearly all of the weaknesses derive from the same source: Sowell is a free-market ideologue.

In this book, Sowell's first major argument is that because culture rather than discrimination is the critical determinant of economic success or failure, societies are not responsible for economic differences among cultural groups. Societies that attempt to reduce economic inequality by redistributing resources from the haves to the have-nots end up impoverishing themselves.

The second major argument is that it's in the long-run economic interest of poor ethnic minorities to devote their efforts to the pursuit of profit in the private sector rather than power in the public one. The principal evidence for these arguments is to be found in his stories about the Chinese, German, Italian, Jewish, Irish, and black immigrants to the United States and other countries.

BY CULTURE SOWELL MEANS, clearly, both human capital and values. I have no quarrel with his argument that both human capital and values will be important determinants of success in a predominantly free-market economy. What is not so clear is, however, what's more important, values or skills? Repeatedly Sowell asserts that values are more important. To cite just one example, he says that what the Germans had "more than specific skills, were a set of attitudes—toward work, thrift, and education—that sustained and advanced them economically."

On what basis does Sowell conclude that values were more important than specific skills for the Germans? He has no measure of the extent to which Germans worked harder than other groups, or how their skills compared with those of the Chinese, Irish, and Italians. As we don't have the figures, it is not clear to me and should not be clear to Sowell. And, just as he gives no measures of culture, he presents no measures of discrimination.

With his stories Sowell illustrates and in a table documents the effects of culture and discrimination on current economic outcomes.

Sowell's stories boil down to the following: that Germans and Italians brought high levels of culture, suffered little discrimination, and did well. Chinese and Jews brought high levels of culture, suffered from high levels of discrimination, and did very well. The Irish brought a low level of culture, suffered from high levels of discrimination, and did poorly for a long time, though finally they are doing

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well. And last, the blacks brought a low level of culture, suffered from extremely high discrimination, and continue to do poorly, catching up very slowly.

II

WHAT, THEN, DO THESE STORIES tell us about the relative importance of discrimination and culture? His version is that discrimination didn't prevent those groups with strong cultures from succeeding. Indeed, even very intense discrimination has been overcome in the long run by groups with strong cultures. That's a good story, the Horatio Alger story of American ethnic groups—a true one. But it's not the only true story.

Sowell's stories tell us nothing about the *relative importance* of discrimination and culture, either at a particular time or for very long periods. For example, I suppose the Chinese in the United States were a bit poorer than the average poor during the era when they faced intense discrimination, exemplified by the phrase "Not a Chinaman's chance." If the fact that the Chinese are now doing well means culture is more important than discrimination, how should we interpret the fact that the Chinese were doing worse than average when they were discriminated against? It can only mean that discrimination was more important than culture then, but isn't now! In other words, discrimination is more important when it's turned on than when it's turned off. Who can disagree with that? But it hardly proves that in the long run culture is a more important factor than discrimination.

The combinations of Sowell's stories are capable of various interpretations. If Chinese and Jewish Americans are now doing better than average despite past discrimination, while blacks are doing worse than average, that does not prove, as Sowell would have his readers believe, that culture is very important and discrimination unimportant in explaining income differences among people. Without more information I can infer nothing from these relationships. It might be that in the absence of discrimination all three groups would do much better than they are doing now—in which case discrimination would be important. It might be that the discrimination against the Jews and even the Chinese immigrants was mild compared to that suffered by blacks. Perhaps the level of discrimination against Chinese and Jews was just sufficient to spur them on to greater than average efforts, whereas the discrimination against blacks was so severe that it destroyed the spirit of many black men and women. (Christopher Jencks makes this and other useful points in a two-part review of some of Sowell's books in the *New York Review of Books*, March 3 and 17, 1983.)

Data aside, common sense suggests that skills, values, and discrimination will affect economic success. Does anyone doubt that the incomes of black professional baseball players were lower than the incomes of white professional baseball players in the first half of the 20th century because of discrimination? The story of the effect of discrimination on black baseball players is like Sowell's stories—interesting and true, but not the only interesting and true story. Though Sowell repeatedly asserts that values are more important than skills and both are more important than discrimination, his stories contribute nothing to resolving the relative importance of each.

Sowell's assertion that redistribution necessarily impoverishes nations is an equally unsupported claim. To quote from his conclusion:

> The crucial question is whether society as a whole—or mankind as a whole—gains when the output of both the fortunate and unfortunate is discouraged by disincentives, and when there are transfers that reduce the extent to which those with human capital can afford to have offspring and increase the extent to which those lacking human capital can afford to have offspring. . . . Transfers from those with self-supporting levels of human capital tend to reduce the number of self-supporting members of the next generation. Transfers to non-self-supporting people tend to increase the proportion of the next generation unable to support themselves. Insofar as a given sum transferred will generally support more ill-raised children than well-raised children, it tends also to increase the total number of people, while inhibiting the production of the means to support them. It is not clear how this is either humane or just to anyone.

This is the classic case for laissez-faire. And, stated this strongly, it is poppycock!

Surely, even Sowell would admit there are redistributions from the haves to the have-nots that increase rather than decrease aggregate wealth. Surely, he would agree that universal public elementary and secondary education increased rather than decreased the wealth of America, Western Europe, and other parts of the world. I hope, at least, that Sowell would agree. Virtually every economist I ever read, including his mentor Milton Friedman, admits that a country that provides public subsidies for at least the elementary education of the poor will be wealthier for it in the long run.

Universal public education is so American that many of us fail to recognize it as a form of

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socialism. When Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote their *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, which called for free public education, most American states outside the South already had it at elementary grades. Those who argue that America's economic preeminence is attributable to our free-market heritage conveniently forget that we led the world in providing free public education.

The critical question for all but ideologues is: Which redistributions are most likely to increase and least likely to reduce wealth? Once we've eliminated the general rule, the work gets harder. Each case must be examined on its merits.

III

We now come to Sowell's second major argument, that it is in the long-run interest of ethnic minorities to devote their efforts to the pursuit of profit in the private sector rather than the pursuit of power in the public one.

His argument is stated in the most general terms without reference to either the type of political system or the numerical strength of the minority group. According to Sowell, the disadvantages of the political route are: (1) heightened group identity evokes counterchauvinism from other groups; (2) leaders who pander to group prejudices and take a hard line are most likely to be rewarded; (3) leaders get the economic rewards, while the masses get nothing; and (4) "political approaches suffer from the sheer volatility of politics, in general, and democratic politics in particular."

None of these arguments is convincing. But even if they all were true, it would still be true that the choice between taking the political or the economic route would often depend on the numerical strength of the minority group and the nature of the political and economic systems. In discussing the effects and limits of politics and economics, Sowell always assumes the worst about the political system and the best about the economic one. The political system always seems to tend toward the intolerant; the economic one toward the tolerant. The latter is guaranteed—of course—by perfect competition in the long run. Some of the world's foremost economists have spent a long time trying to explain how economic discrimination persisted so long in the United States labor market, despite the fact that most economists consider most U.S. markets to be fairly competitive. Sowell might reply that the U.S. labor market is noncompetitive because of unions and the minimum wage, and thus, as a result, blacks suffer in the labor market.

I think the empirical evidence supports the proposition that, on balance, blacks are helped rather than hurt by unions, while the effect of the minimum wage on black income is ambiguous. But if I were to grant Professor Sowell the argument that the United States labor market has hurt blacks recently—that is, for about the last 50 years—because of unions and the minimum wage, then we would agree that the labor market has been neither so perfect nor so tolerant as Sowell argues it will be in the "long run." In such a case, isn't it possible that the political route in a democratic polity such as the United States would be at least as good for blacks as the economic route? More generally, isn't it wise to avoid putting all your eggs in any one basket?

But Sowell's theoretical arguments are really a sideshow. His major approach is to argue by example. The empirical evidence in support of the proposition that the best strategy for poor ethnic minorities is to pursue profit in the private sector rather than power in the public one is superficially convincing. The argument is that the Chinese, Germans, Italians, and Jews did the former. The Irish did the latter. The Irish were the slowest rising and still remain the least wealthy of all these groups. QED!

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Not quite. To begin with, Sowell mischaracterizes the Jewish experience in America. (He may mischaracterize Chinese, German, and Italian experience as well, but I know too little about these subjects to comment.) No matter how measured, American Jews have been very active politically from the outset. Jews helped organize unions and new political parties. They worked in and became important figures in the two major political parties. They are now much more likely than the average to contribute money and to vote (and I would bet that was true from the outset), and they have run for and won elective office out of proportion to their numbers. Finally, Jewish institutions go out of their way to heighten group identity.

More important, indeed fatal to Sowell's argument, is the story he himself tells of the Irish—a sad history of the costs to both Irish and British, but especially the Irish, of the British subjugation of the Irish. According to Sowell, the Irish had much further to go than the Chinese, Germans, Italians, and Jews. Thus it is possible that if they had not chosen the political route, the Irish would not have come so far.

Nor does Sowell present the evidence that the Irish have come even further than his data suggest. Andrew Greeley, in his book *Ethnicity, Denomination and Inequality* (1976), shows that when you distinguish between the Catholic and Protestant Irish, you find that the Catholic Irish, who took the political route, have the second highest incomes, just behind the Jews, of all white American ethnic groups, while the Protestant Irish, who took the free-enterprise, nonpolitical route, have nearly the lowest. This piece of evidence hurts the don't-take-the-political-route argument in two ways: by an across-groups and a within-group comparison. Possibly Sowell may consider the evidence faulty, but he does himself and his readers a disservice in overlooking it.

If the Catholic Irish of the big political machines have climbed to the heights of America's economic pyramid, how important to the ascent were the political machines? Peter Eisinger (in *The Politics of Displacement*, 1980, and his 1983 book *Black Employment in City Government: 1973–1980*) presents evidence that the Irish capture of political power in many big cities played a critical role in the group's economic advancement, and that blacks are just beginning to follow the same path. In contrast, on the basis of an ideological preference for the market, Sowell recommends that blacks turn their backs on the political route and thereby perhaps throw away what may at last be a golden opportunity.

IV

SOWELL'S GRATUITOUS INSULTS to American civil rights leaders first angered and now sadden me. He writes, "A large civil rights establishment, inside and outside government, has to find work to do, and must convince itself and others that this work is vitally important." For Sowell, civil rights leaders are demagogues who profit financially—"often earning annual incomes running in hundreds of thousands of dollars, even if their programs and approaches prove futile for the larger purpose of lifting other blacks out of poverty." They pander, he tells us, to the resentments of blacks instead of telling them the truth that success under capitalism requires hard work, frugality, and all-around discipline.

Sowell's emphasis on the importance of hard work serves a useful function. All successful middle- and working-class parents attempt to instill the value of hard work in their children. All great leaders do the same with their people. Booker T. Washington, one of the greatest of American black leaders, whom Sowell quotes so approvingly, did a superb job of that.

But Sowell's implication that civil rights leaders other than Booker T. Washington have pandered to prejudices rather than stressing individual responsibility is astounding. Is Sowell completely unfamiliar with Martin Luther King's career or is he again blocking because of ideological blinders? To quote from one of King's speeches:

> Whatever your life's work is, do it well. A man should do his job so well that the living, the dead, and the unborn could do it no better. If it falls to your lot to be a street sweeper, sweep streets like Michelangelo painted pictures, like Shakespeare wrote poetry, like Beethoven composed music; sweep streets so well that all the host of heaven and earth will have to pause and say, "Here lived a great street sweeper who swept his job well."*

And is Sowell completely unaware of the "drop drugs, study hard, and work hard" message Jesse Jackson has been preaching to black youth in the Chicago ghettos for the last decade?

For Sowell the United States of America is the greatest place to live because of its tradition of laissez-faire capitalism. Neither democracy nor socialism gets any credit. Politics is bad. Economics is good. The idea that a judicious mixture of capitalism and socialism might be the best of all

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* Quoted in Stephen B. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King Jr.* (New York: New American Library, 1982), p. 105.

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possible worlds is as noxious to him as religious tolerance must be to the Ayatollah Khomeni. Sowell's faith in the free market makes him close his eyes to as much reality as do Communists who believe that capitalism leads to the increasing impoverishment of the working class.

I look forward to the day when Sowell's faith in the market and our country is strong enough to allow him to forthrightly see the shortcomings of both. For then he may go beyond being a very good storyteller and produce a truly superb book. □

Leo P. Ribuffo

The FDR Tradition: Shadow Boxing

IN THE SHADOW OF FDR: FROM HARRY TRUMAN TO RONALD REAGAN, by William E. Leuchtenburg. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press. 346 pp. $19.95

Franklin D. Roosevelt led the United States through the Great Depression and World War II, the worst crises any contemporary voter remembers. During his 12 years in office, moreover, Democrats and Republicans sorted themselves into the ideological pattern that still survives today. Before the 1930s, it was hard to tell conservatives from self-proclaimed progressives; thereafter, though cultural differences sometimes shattered economic alliances and electoral appeals still tended to obfuscate, a coherent spectrum could be discerned: liberals have wanted to expand the welfare state begun during the Depression, while conservatives have tried to dismantle it or limit its growth. Given these legacies, it is hardly surprising that historians, pundits, and politicians have used Roosevelt as a standard to measure presidential achievement.

William E. Leuchtenburg shows how eight subsequent presidents, their allies, and adversaries viewed Roosevelt and invoked his name to win elections. Harry S Truman, FDR's casually chosen running mate in 1944, proposed extensions of the New Deal while distancing himself from "crackpot" New Dealers. Holding Truman responsible for Washington corruption and national boredom, prominent centrist liberals, including two of FDR's sons, tried to deny him the Democratic nomination in 1948; holding Truman responsible for an unnecessary cold war, some left liberals supported Henry A. Wallace on the Progressive party ticket. Although Dwight D. Eisenhower had been chosen with Roosevelt's customary nonchalance to command the invasion of Europe, Leuchtenburg concludes that he never fell under FDR's shadow to the extent Truman did. Respectful of FDR's wartime leadership, Eisenhower nevertheless disliked his "frivolous" manner and sponsorship of "creeping socialism." During the 1950s, liberals accused President Eisenhower of betraying Roosevelt's commitment to the needy, and conservatives charged him with creating a "dime-store New Deal."

The best chapter in the book, on John F. Kennedy, begins with his father, Joseph, who first held high office under FDR and then repudiated that "crippled son of a bitch." Both father and son came to associate New Deal liberalism with softness. Nevertheless, John befriended Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., who helped him win a Senate seat in 1952 and the presidential nomination in 1960. Thereafter, Kennedy curried favor with Eleanor Roosevelt and often quoted her husband. Yet he saw "no validity" in the frequent comparisons of Roosevelt's administration and his own. In 1953, he had called Social Security "as dated as silent movies," and seven years later still rejected New Deal programs as a guide for his "new generation." John F. Kennedy was the first neoliberal.

Lyndon B. Johnson sensed as much when he complained that Kennedy was a "little too conservative to suit my taste." Unlike Kennedy, Johnson won a seat in Congress as a Roosevelt loyalist. After tacking rightward to survive in Texas politics, he entered the White House eager to expand the welfare state. In both substance and style Johnson borrowed from FDR and the New Deal.

While stressing domestic similarities, Leuchtenburg strains to distinguish FDR's undeclared war in the Atlantic during 1941 from Johnson's undeclared war in Southeast Asia; Roosevelt, though guilty of "guile and deceit," is credited with a "measured" approach to foreign affairs that Johnson lacked. Leuchtenburg ultimately falls back on psychoanalytic language to explain LBJ's failure to match Roosevelt's record: an "obsessive" identification with his political patriarch masked resent-

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ment; the Great Society, a better New Deal, was his "means of revenge."

Richard M. Nixon escapes psychoanalysis to face the author's wrath. According to Leuchtenburg, only the Watergate scandal prevented Nixon from dismantling the "New Deal and its progeny"; Watergate was "not at all the same" as Roosevelt's harassment of opponents. Both assumptions are questionable. Nixon's curbs on public advocacy for the poor and frequent praise of rugged individualism coexisted with increased social spending. If his obstruction of justice in a burglary case was unique, his wiretaps, bugs, and fears that foreign powers manipulated domestic dissent do recall FDR's campaign against the America First Committee and congressional noninterventionists.

Disdain for Nixon should not prevent scholars from exploring such parallels. Roosevelt and Nixon stand out as the most complicated—and perhaps the smartest—presidents of the past half-century. Indeed, better than Democrats who mythologized FDR, Nixon understood that he was an "operator" who charmed senators at home and prime ministers abroad, as well as a showman who knew how to "lift people."

After briefly discussing "how little Roosevelt mattered" to Gerald R. Ford, Leuchtenburg tries to make sense of Jimmy Carter. In his judgment, President Carter was a technocrat who appreciated FDR primarily as a war leader and sponsor of a technological marvel, rural electrification; but soon he alienated liberal Democrats who better understood the New Deal heritage. Carter's failure to see "how strong a shadow FDR cast" contributed significantly to his defeat in 1980, Leuchtenburg concludes.

Conversely, Ronald Reagan never got over the "adulation" that accompanied his support for Roosevelt in four elections. Even after winning the presidency as a conservative Republican, Reagan quoted FDR, emulated his rhetorical style, and hailed him as an "American giant." Leuchtenburg documents this "baffling, labyrinthine relationship" without explaining it.

Overall, Leuchtenburg is better at telling stories than finding meaning. Sometimes interesting insights interrupt the narrative. Leuchtenburg says, for example, that Truman's strident declarations of cold war were intended partly to distance himself from Roosevelt, and he believes that Johnson exaggerated his connection with FDR to distance himself from the Kennedys. Rarely, however, do insights build to a convincing case. Most important, Roosevelt's effect on his successors remains unexplained because Leuchtenburg substitutes weak metaphors for sustained argument and pays too much attention to what presidents (or other politicians) say but not enough to what they do.

LEUCHTENBURG'S FAVORITE METAPHOR covers so much political landscape that no president can escape FDR's shadow. On the one hand, Democrats stand in Roosevelt's shadow when they expand programs started during the New Deal, hire his former advisers, or win votes from the same sort of people who made up the Roosevelt coalition. On the other hand, Republicans also stand in that shadow because they try so hard to escape it by curtailing programs begun during the New Deal, shunning his advisers as traitors or fools, and seeking to smash the Roosevelt coalition. Leuchtenburg offers a suggestion, too fleeting to be helpful, that FDR was a "father figure" who evoked ambivalent feelings in his successors. For the most part, however, his metaphor means that Roosevelt *over*shadowed all subsequent presidents.

The warm reception this book has received shows what a traditional liberal historian can get away with. If a revisionist diplomatic historian had written in similar fashion about the "shadow" cast on foreign policy by the quest for foreign markets, he would be chided, perhaps by Leuchtenburg himself, for imprecision and failure to prove the connection between talk and action. Yet *In the Shadow of FDR* contains these methodological flaws, and few (if any) reviewers have interrupted their praise to comment.

Leuchtenburg exhibits least precision in judging continuity and change. Much as an earlier generation wondered whether the New Deal represented the fulfillment or the degradation of progressivism, now conservatives, neoconservatives, liberals, and neoliberals debate whether the Great Society merely enlarged the New Deal or made basic changes in the means and ends of reform. This problem is more difficult than most ideological combatants suppose. For example, was the Johnson administration's stress on "maximum feasible participation" in poverty programs unprecedented, or was it the New Deal rhetoric of grass-roots democracy translated into social science jargon? How much did rank-and-file participation influence the Tennessee Valley Authority in the 1930s and the Office of Economic Opportunity in the 1960s? Instead of examining federal programs, Leuchtenburg quotes Johnson's hyperbolic homage to FDR and offers another unexplicated metaphor, that the New Deal was "midwife" to the Great Society.

Leuchtenburg's political light meter goes hay-

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wire when it places Richard Nixon in the shadow of FDR. Nixon repeatedly emphasized his intellectual debts to Woodrow Wilson and *Theodore* Roosevelt. These allusions served, moreover, to distance Nixon from his presidential father figure, Dwight D. Eisenhower. Starting in the late 1950s, Nixon both exaggerated his intimacy with Eisenhower and pointedly asserted his own independence. Their personal relationship aside, impressive continuities linked the Eisenhower and Nixon administrations. Both these Republicans expanded the welfare state in spite of themselves, eased the Soviet-American cold war while using the CIA to undermine Third World governments, and tried to sound statesmanlike while subordinates did their dirty work.

By and large, Leuchtenburg seems less concerned with assessing the Roosevelt administration's long-range consequences than with defending a version of liberalism he retrospectively attributes to it. The normative Roosevelt who emerges piecemeal over 329 pages is a cagey yet charming fellow who champions social justice and leads the United States from isolationism to world power. This version of events routinely appears in Democratic campaign speeches, but a historian should know better and, at some level, Leuchtenburg undoubtedly does. To be sure, he passes over—instead of rebutting—scholarship skeptical of Roosevelt's diplomatic skill and commitment to reform; perhaps he senses that these minority opinions are more easily ignored than refuted.

What is remarkable, however, is that Leuchtenburg's own interpretation of the 1930s has grown less sophisticated. His classic, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal,* published in 1963 at a moment of liberal ascendancy, documented FDR's hesitancy to support unemployment relief and the National Labor Relations Act. Now, appalled by the recent conservative resurgence, he presents Roosevelt as an unambiguous patron of the welfare state.

Like most interpreters of modern America, Leuchtenburg postulates a linear reform tradition stretching from the Progressive era through the New Deal and Great Society to the present, views charismatic presidents as anthropomorphic embodiments of the tradition, and considers liberalism the normal national mood. Almost by definition, therefore, conservatives who reach the White House must be anomalies or apostates. Although this framework bolsters liberal morale, it drastically oversimplifies political history.

One of Leuchtenburg's analogies points to the basic problem. As he notes, ritual appeals to the mythic FDR resemble earlier invocations of Abraham Lincoln. In the latter case, however, historians no longer contribute to the folklore by measuring all Gilded Age Republicans against a normative liberal Lincoln. Rather, they show how participants in his coalition, an amalgam of former Whigs, Democrats, and Know Nothings united by antislavery sentiment, later became robber barons and mugwumps, white racists and black militants, expansionists and anti-imperialists. All claimed to represent the true party of Lincoln and, considering his complex personality and masterful political juggling, most could cite some words or acts to sustain the claim.

In the 20th century too, political bonds break as issues go in and out of fashion. Roosevelt's constituency was broader than Lincoln's, his world view less consistent, and his manner less direct; on the verge of breaking with FDR in 1934, Huey Long aptly complained, "Maybe he says 'Fine!' to everybody." Thus, contrary to seekers after a usable liberal past, there were many plausible paths from the New Deal coalition. The Kennedy administration, whose generosity to big business Leuchtenburg considers a lapse from grace, probably made fewer concessions than the Roosevelt administration during 1933–34 and in World War II.

CONFLICT AND CONSENSUS

A Festschrift in Honor of Lewis A. Coser

Edited by *Walter W. Powell* and *Richard Robbins.*

Memorable contributions by Irving Howe, Anthony Giddens, Suzanne Keller, Dennis Wrong, Robert K. Merton, Kai Erikson, and other prominent scholars and social critics make up this outstanding tribute to one of the foremost sociologists alive today. Grouped around the themes that have concerned Coser for nearly 50 years, the selections discuss historical sociology; class, politics, and conflict; the sociology of commitment; the state of sociology as a discipline, and the social role of intellectuals. A selected bibliography of Coser's writings and an introduction by the editors are included.

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Jimmy Carter was no anomaly living largely "outside the history of the [Democratic] party." Rather, we must take seriously Carter's identification with the Southern "tradition" of Richard Russell, a Roosevelt loyalist until the late 1930s whose growing hostility to bureaucracy and presidential power moved him to join, then lead, the Senate's conservative bloc. And Ronald Reagan's route rightward from Hyde Park was no labyrinthine detour but a well-traveled thoroughfare. Many members of his generation, also buoyed by prosperity, frightened by the cold war, and discomfited by the civil rights movement (which had never been a Roosevelt priority), joined Reagan in belatedly deciding that liberal Democrats were too soft abroad and too generous at home.

In the irregular course of American politics, substantive issues change less than campaign styles, which presidents can alter more easily than the economic system. The current discussion of "industrial policy," for example, rephrases old debates about "planning," the comparable buzz word of the Great Depression. This reprise does not mean that Felix Rohatyn and Robert Reich write in the shadow of Bernard Baruch and Stuart Chase, their unsung antecedents. It means that the problem of corporate power, which worried Americans 40 years before the New Deal, remains unresolved 40 years afterward. Yet the debate about planning—like political discourse generally—is flashier than during the 1930s.

Leuchtenburg to the contrary, President Reagan's "cadences" are not the same as Roosevelt's. FDR, who began his career on the stump and adapted brilliantly to radio, retained a talent for flourish and formality Reagan lacks. Nor does Reagan's preference for one-liners derive solely from his television career. Rather, the prevailing style of political campaigning and commentary bears the mark of John F. Kennedy. Following his example, presidential contenders as diverse as Gary Hart, George Wallace, and Jimmy Carter have tried, with varying success, to personify cool vigor. Journalists, trained to spurn serious commitment and long paragraphs, look askance at those politicians—Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale—whose quips fall flat.

Neither shifting campaign styles nor skeptical scholars are likely to alter the basic contours of Roosevelt's popular image. Much as Lincoln lives on pedestals, mountain tops, and in television "docudramas" as the Great Emancipator, FDR will be recalled as founding father of the welfare state. Furthermore, despite Leuchtenburg's lament that references to Roosevelt have become "largely ritualistic," the mythology retains political potency as well as good prospects for longevity. Millions of Americans too young to remember Roosevelt firsthand have heard tales of his benevolence from parents or grandparents (many of whom were Popular Front radicals). Analogous family folklore, shrewdly mobilized, kept most blacks loyal to the "party of Lincoln" long after his death and long after Republican presidents stopped protecting their civil rights. In similar fashion, Democrats drifting toward neoliberalism try to hold working-class votes by continuing to invoke Roosevelt's name; less cynically, politicians seeking to expand the welfare state still claim him as their mentor.

Those of us who are unencumbered by Roosevelt legends should heed three lessons to be learned from his administration, particularly when welfare-state liberals return to power: reform enthusiasms pass quickly, leaving basic problems unsolved; progress depends on grass-roots pressure as well as on a receptive White House; and no president deserves uncritical support. □

Leonard Kriegel

The Native Imagination

An American Procession: The Major American Writers from 1830 to 1930: The Crucial Century, by Alfred Kazin. New York: Knopf. 408 pp. $18.95.

Alfred Kazin's new book is one of those large-scale thematic studies in which a prominent critic offers a summing-up of American literary culture. Both the book's approach and its thesis are closely related to what used to be called "wisdom literature." As is often the case, the reader's encounter with Kazin's critical opinions becomes intensely personal. Kazin's first book, *On Native Grounds*, evoked an equally personal response, at least for this reader. It was, I remember, the first book of literary criticism I ever picked up. I learned from it that while criticism might be marginal to the

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writing of fiction and poetry, there could not be a literary culture without it. For a culture that saw itself clearly, a critic was the keeper of accounts.

The intense commitment to language and writing that filled the pages of *On Native Grounds* can also be found in *An American Procession.* As a critic, Kazin is not particularly interested in exegesis, nor does he seek from literature the liberation of humanity from its own history. Instead, he remains singularly determined to renew our excitement in both the writer and his work. For Kazin, the sense of discovery is the ultimate act of critical homage. Language excites him to the point where he can bring himself to forgive what would otherwise be unforgivable. What irritates him about a writer such as Howells, for example, is that Howells lacked not a sense of drama but the kind of commitment to language and style that his friend Henry James possessed in such abundance.

An American Procession must ultimately be judged not only on the basis of Kazin's love of good writing but on the interpretations it offers of major American writers from 1830 to 1930—the era Kazin somewhat arbitrarily labels "the crucial century." And it turns out to be a difficult book to judge, at times remarkably insightful and stimulating, at times too diffuse.

There are chapters that can stand with anything American criticism has offered over the past two decades; but considered as a book with a thesis—that the expansion of the American sense of selfhood found its voice in a literature in which that self assumed heroic proportions for our writers—it is not particularly convincing. Kazin himself has admitted that he "had difficulty getting a handle on the central theme." I suspect this accounts for the book's excessively oracular tone: judgments pound us, as self-propelled and insistent as if shot from a howitzer. "Whatever is not firsthand in Whitman is fake." "The 'newness' with which Emerson has identified himself made him deliverer of an uncreated culture." But the book also contains passages of such strong phrasing that we are quick to make them part of the way we shall now look at our literary past. "Melville's protagonist and hero is thematically the deserter, the shipwrecked sailor, the castaway, the tramp, the mad author, the criminal—and most centrally, the iconoclast who does not escape retribution from society by becoming a murderer."

The Alfred Kazin now approaching his seventieth birthday shares with the critic who was not yet thirty when he wrote *On Native Grounds* a need to make sense of American life through an examination of American writing. Unlike his mentor Edmund Wilson, Kazin has never been able to distance himself from the country. He can't afford to. Wilson could not only trace his ancestry back to Cotton Mather, he would assume a proprietary interest in places. He was so much the American squire that he could take his spiritual leave from a country he claimed no longer to understand. For Wilson, American history was a family affair. For Kazin, the author of *A Walker in the City*, one suspects it is still a question of proving his right to belong.

THIS BOOK IS INTENDED AS MORE than a work of criticism; *An American Procession* is a book about America's rise to the center of the world's stage. And, like Wilson, Kazin finds it difficult to approve of a country in which a thing will count *because* it is American rather than because it is good or evil, virtuous or vindictive. His purpose is not so much to make sense of America as it is to make sense of himself in America. Because of this, his book's argument is not really political. Literature remains as central to *An American Procession* as it was to *On Native Grounds.* And Kazin's argument has as its source the way in which he feels himself buffeted by history and saved by literature. The appeal of *An American Procession* transcends one's reactions to its judgments. What it offers the reader is a good writer's statement of purpose. It is historical criticism of a kind that transforms writers into characters, the people who guided the critic out of Brownsville.

And yet, if Kazin's sense of discovery remains exciting, many of his arguments seem curiously traditional. Once again, we are presented with an Emerson who is American culture's one-man fife-and-drum corps; and once again, we watch the development of Eliot's vitiated yearning for religious salvation as it leads from the sharp despair of *The Waste Land* to the willed hope of the poems of religious conversion. And here are Twain, Dreiser, Crane, much as we have always seen them; in short, here is Alfred Kazin's somewhat conventional American Century. From 1830 to 1930, he takes us from writer to writer. If we pause long enough to look at our guide, we see a man who knows the price he has paid for literature but who is, perhaps, no longer quite certain of why he paid it. Or even whether the price was necessary.

Kazin's struggle with American culture is perhaps best contained in what he writes about our national *bête blanche*, Henry Adams. For me, Adams's importance lies well beyond his talents; for Kazin, he is so distinctly American a voice that he becomes the nation itself. So graceful is Kazin's

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prose that we have to force ourselves to take issue with what he is saying: "[Adams] became, inextricably and winningly, first a witness to history, then a symbol of history, and finally the embodiment of history trying to understand itself." What ringing syntax for so small a man. The truth is that Adams never quite understood that there were real scorpions in that democratic American garden. And he was amazed to discover that they had the temerity to sting an Adams. "To see history as style," Kazin writes, "one must begin with the sense of command." But among the virtues of that great American unwashed who made Adams nervous was the insistence that command be earned. Other Americans understood that history has public as well as private consequences.

But the long chapter on Adams, along with the remarkable prologue in which Adams and Eliot are pitted against each other—and against the reader, too—shows us not only Kazin's own criticism but the idea of historical criticism at its most powerful. Only a sensibility that shares with Emerson, Melville, and Whitman a love of language, a commitment to the democratization of speech itself, could have produced such powerful chapters. At the same time, only a mind still intent on proving itself to a culture that it views as frequently confused and sometimes even mendacious could have accepted so completely what is a traditional view of American literary culture.

In the final analysis, Kazin is too much at home with these writers, too comfortable with his subject matter. I, for one, found myself wishing that he had allowed himself to remain more of an outsider, that he had turned his attention to, say, the line leading from Adams to Pound. I would have liked an opportunity to read Kazin on the one as provincial in the education he demanded from ancestry and the other as an educated provincial. What Trotsky, in a remarkably felicitous phrase, termed "the plot mentality of history" has few better examples, at least in America, than Adams bewailing the arrival of the Israel Cohens or Pound accusing the "yids" of sending the "goyim" to slaughter while the stench of Auschwitz was still on the wind.

Of course, it isn't altogether fair to criticize a writer for what he never intended to do. Still, one can be forgiven for wishing—especially when Kazin himself skirts the possibility by writing, "The real muse is History—but History buried in words." And too much obeisance to style, the reader adds to himself. In America, style is too often confused with substance. For a critic such as Alfred Kazin, intent on celebrating those who are concerned with the word, these recognitions are bound to be discomforting. In the last analysis, they send one back to a darker America, Melville's America, where one "does not escape retribution from society by becoming a murderer." □

Brian Morton

The Wrecking Crew

A Season of Spoils, by Jonathan Lash, Katherine Gillman, and David Sheridan. New York: Pantheon Books. 385 pp. Paperback, $6.95.

As soon as Ronald Reagan became president, he set out to deliver private enterprise from the bondage of regulation. As the authors of *A Season of Spoils* explain, his thoughts on the matter were straightforward:

> Industrial production results in wealth and progress. Wealth and progress keep us strong. Regulation does nothing to contribute to production; on the contrary, it is a hindrance. Governmental action that interferes with the strength and progress of America makes no sense and must be stopped.

Environmental regulations seemed to him particularly odious. "Economic tragedies" were caused by "environmental extremists" and "bad science." The aim of the extremists was clear: in the words of James Watt, they sought to "weaken America."

Reagan's attack on the environmental protection system was twofold. First, he hired people committed to "regulatory relief." On the advice of James Watt, he chose Anne Burford to be administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Burford had come to Watt's attention through her exertions in the Colorado legislature as a leader of a band of conservatives who called themselves "the crazies." From the day she arrived in Washington, her purposes were lofty. As she put it in her first speech to her staff, "The EPA of the Reagan administration will be remembered for the money it saved taxpayers because we streamlined regulations, cut down on permit-processing time, and . . . cut back on the required paperwork for EPA projects."

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Other appointees were equally distinguished: John Hernandez, the deputy administrator, who replied, after a member of his staff mentioned acid rain, that "there is no such thing"; and Rita Lavelle, the assistant administrator for the EPA's Solid Waste and Emergency Response division, who listed her professional goals:

> 1. Change perception (local and national) of Love Canal from dangerous to benign. 2. Obtain credible data that 50 (150) of the nation's most dangerous hazardous waste sites have been rendered benign. 3. Provide credible proof that industries operating today are not dangerous to public health.

The second front of Reagan's attack was institutional. Within a month of taking office he had signed Executive Order 12291, which gave the Office of Management and Budget something like veto power over the proposals of federal regulatory agencies, as well as "a broad retrospective mandate to 'revise and rescind' " existing regulations. The OMB enjoys an extraordinary freedom from public scrutiny—"it makes no record of what it does or why." And, under David Stockman, it was concerned solely with cutting costs. "The cost to society of *not* regulating pollution" was outside its domain. More than once, after Burford had cut some program's budget enough to cripple it, the OMB told her that she had to cut it again. You might say that Stockman achieved the impossible: he made Burford look like a defender of public health.

THIS BOOK gives a detailed account of the changing of the guard in Washington and cites a series of case studies of "regulatory relief" in action. The record is even more revolting than you thought. Consider:

• After a high level of lead was found in the soil around two schools in Dallas, John Hernandez canceled the emergency clean-up that had been ordered by the regional EPA. He wanted proof that lead could also be found in the students' blood. He ordered a further series of tests, which took 21 months to complete. The clean-up was not undertaken until two years after the original findings were made—when both Hernandez and Burford had resigned. Lead contamination causes brain damage in children.

• In 1979, in Globe, Arizona, 50 families were informed that the land on which they were living had once been the site of an asbestos mill, and that their soil and air were saturated with asbestos. Asbestos is "one of the most powerful of known carcinogens."

When, in 1980, Congress created a billion-dollar "Superfund" to clean up hazardous waste, the people of Globe assumed that they would soon be helped. Instead, they spent the next two years petitioning, begging, and finally suing EPA officials in an effort to make them act.

Having been informed by the Centers for Disease Control, by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and by EPA scientists that the 50 families were in great danger, Rita Lavelle hired her own consultant, who advised her not to be swayed by alarmists. Lavelle then suggested that EPA scientists send their evidence to the scientists of the asbestos industry trade association, who would check to see if these methods were sound. In the meantime, Burford was also busy—trying to redefine the Superfund's mandate in order to free it of responsibility for cleaning up mining waste sites such as the one at Globe.

In May 1983, after Lavelle had been fired and Burford had become the subject of a congressional investigation, the EPA finally drew on the Superfund to compensate the 50 families for the cost of their homes.

At first glance, Lavelle and Burford's refusal to act seems to be an example of what Herman Melville called "motiveless malignity." It becomes more understandable when we learn of the secret agreement between the White House and the EPA brought to light by the congressional investigation. The idea was to spend as little of the Superfund money as possible, so that when the fund became eligible for extension Reagan could argue that it wasn't needed, since it had been so little used. The congressional investigators found a note in Burford's files: "We are trying to avoid 'Son of Superfund.' "

• Ronald Reagan had ascertained that economic tragedies were being brought about by "bad science"; when his appointees took over the EPA, the era of "good science" began. "Good science," as John Hernandez explained, "makes good economics." With a self-confidence untempered by understanding, Reagan's people briskly cast aside the accepted norms of scientific method. Whenever a group of tests showed contradictory results, they erred on the side of recklessness, giving credence to findings most favorable to industry. They accepted without hesitation a controversial theory claiming that some carcinogens are harmless below a certain threshold of exposure. And they derided experiments involving laboratory animals, arguing that no substance should be regulated unless it has been proved to cause cancer in people. The only problem

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with this, as the authors of *A Season of Spoils* point out, is that until we divest ourselves of our quaint taboo against giving people cancer *intentionally*, such proof will remain practically impossible to come by. "Even the strong connection between cigarette smoking and lung cancer in humans," they remind us, "took 40 years to establish."

A RECURRING THEME in this book is the observation that Reagan's people were less concerned with keeping the public safe than with keeping the corporations happy. They let Dow Chemical rewrite the EPA report on dioxin contamination in the Great Lakes; they sought to increase the amount of lead allowed in gasoline; they regularly granted "emergency exemptions" to laws banning dangerous pesticides, when the only emergency in sight was the chance for someone to make a fast buck.

The point has been made before, but it bears repeating: this is hardly conservatism. It's mere recklessness; it conserves nothing. The meaning of "regulatory relief" is simple: it's the sanction, by government, of the lust for quick profits. This book is filled with examples of how destructive that lust can be. Farmers attract pests to their land because they don't rotate crops; then they have to use pesticides, which poison both their land and their workers. Producers of toxic waste dispose of the stuff cheaply and sloppily; and years later, when the public cleans it up, we have to spend ten times what it would have cost to do it right in the first place. There isn't even an economic excuse for mucking up the environment.

That's the great irony: the "extreme environmentalists" are more responsible defenders of capitalism than Reagan is. Far from being enemies of the system, most of them seek only to mitigate its most harmful effects. One thought the lesson had been learned with Franklin Roosevelt: part of the job of government, in a capitalist society, is to save capitalism from itself. Unregulated, it lays waste the land and the people that together are the basis of its survival. What Francis Bacon said about "extreme self-lovers" can also be said of profit-seeking corporations: "they will set a house on fire and it were but to roast their own eggs."

Such subtleties elude Ronald Reagan. That the house is burning doesn't trouble him. The eggs are roasting nicely, and he is very pleased.

THE BOOK is not without faults: it provides no historical perspective, it isn't well organized, and its prose is slapdash. But its indictment of the Reagan administration's environmental policies is exhaustive and convincing. Many of us, when we hear about the abuse of the environment, think it means the ruin of the landscape. The great merit of *A Season of Spoils* is that it makes that comfortable illusion impossible. It reminds us that lives are at stake. □

Alexander Dallin

Soviet Russia — Is It "Neo-Stalinist?"

THE NEO-STALINIST STATE: CLASS, ETHNICITY, AND CONSENSUS IN SOVIET SOCIETY, by Victor Zaslavsky. (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe. 195 pp. Cloth $25.00, paperback $10.95.

The recent, "third" wave of emigrés from the Soviet Union has produced a wealth of valuable memoirs and works of fiction. But, except for a handful of economists, it has been singularly barren of significant contributions to our understanding of Soviet politics and society. Here Victor Zaslavsky, who previously taught in Leningrad and now teaches in Canada, is a welcome exception. This volume—a collection of essays—marks him as an able sociologist. At its best, his work makes original contributions. While these papers are primarily for the specialist, the layman can profit from reading Zaslavsky on such matters as the status of the Soviet working class and differentiations within it, and the pattern of ethnic tensions.

Zaslavsky's work is particularly good in dealing with the mechanisms of social control available to the regime. We have, one hopes, advanced beyond the notion that the Soviet system survives primarily by reliance on coercion. But even if one accepts the hypothesis that it has a diffuse legitimacy in the minds of most Soviet citizens, the question remains how the authorities manipulate opinion and behavior through a combination of differential controls and rewards aimed at different groups and strata of the population.

Zaslavsky's familiarity with Marxist categories enables him to look for the socioeconomic roots of political behavior for the groups he examines. This

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leads him to focus very usefully on such devices as the internal-passport system and the institution of "closed cities"—the most desirable centers, where residence is tightly (if somewhat ineffectively) controlled—and other instances of socioeconomic stratification. Other papers deal with the special status and privileges of workers at so-called closed enterprises, and with differences among different age and social groups in their reaction to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Zaslavsky's general outlook also leads him to search for an "objective" basis for all political differences and, in effect, for elements of a class conflict in the Soviet Union. He tries valiantly, but at least this reader remains skeptical. One of the distinguishing marks of the Soviet-type system is, after all, the ability of actors in the political arena to override socio-economic pressures and to dictate priorities free of class or group interests. Moreover, the upsurge and decline of dissent in the Soviet Union in the 1960s and '70s can readily be related to political decisions (such as the end of mass terror under Khrushchev) or even to trends abroad (the waves of protest in the West, particularly among university youth), but not to stages of socioeconomic development or the definition of self-interest by particular groups in the Soviet Union.

ZASLAVSKY DOES WELL in recognizing and stressing some of the significant changes that have occurred in the Soviet Union since (and perhaps thanks to) Stalin's death in 1953. All the more surprising then to have him describe the U.S.S.R. as a "neo-Stalinist state" and also attach the label of neo-Stalinism to one of the two most likely alternatives that he sees lying ahead. He goes to considerable lengths to show how Stalin's name and at least part of his record have crept back into current parlance and historiography. But this scarcely proves his point. If neo-Stalinism is an objective social category, you could have it anywhere, without invoking Stalin's name. By the same token, the rehabilitation of Stalin (an exaggeration, in any event) need not entail neo-Stalinism. Since the use of the term "neo-Stalinism" seems to be gaining currency, even in serious works, its appropriateness may deserve a brief discussion.

There are those—be they Alexander Solzhenitsyn or Richard Pipes—who see the Soviet era as essentially homogeneous. To them, there is no sharp break between Lenin and Stalin, even less between Leninism and Stalinism, nor any qualitative change from the Stalin era to the years that followed. When they describe the present Soviet Union as Stalinist, they are essentially stressing the elements of continuity. But this is not the sense in which Zaslavsky (and not he alone) uses the term "neo-Stalinist." While he does not define it, it presumably stands for a syndrome of policies, values, and institutions that is sufficiently distinct to deserve a label other than "Soviet," "authoritarian," or "one-party state with a central command economy." Yet, if there are any defining characteristics of Stalinism, they are bound to include, among others, (1) a Stalin, by whatever name, and (2) arbitrary mass terror.

There are other significant changes that distinguish the Stalin years from more recent phases, for instance, the nature of elite politics and decision-making, the altered priorities in resource allocation, the scope of contacts with the outside world, or the toleration of some policy disputes. Zaslavsky does in fact deal with a number of these disputes, and Seweryn Bialer has given a fine summary of them in his book *Stalin's Successors*.

If this is so, then—unless neo-Stalinism is defined for us in some novel way—it is misleading to use this label for today's Soviet Union. Whatever else, there is mercifully no Stalin in sight, and a return to Stalinist mass terror is one of the least likely prospects. Western readers, depressed by accounts of survivors, are apt to forget that the labor camps no longer exist as a mass institution to deal with political prisoners, even if some of the recent cases are scandalous and incompatible with our standards of justice.

There is another reason to avoid using the Stalinist label when speaking of the present U.S.S.R., and that is to avoid that minimizing of the difference between the 1930s and the 1980s, which has become rather fashionable for some self-styled revisionists here and abroad. It becomes all too easy to charge "professional anti-Stalinists" with ideological fanaticism, to redefine the purges as administrative zealotry and occasional incompetence, and to move toward a measure of rehabilitation of Stalinism among decent and honest people. This effort will require substantive rebuttal, but it is well to avoid any terminological legerdemain that would make it easier to confuse 1948 with 1984.

Surprisingly then, given the care and detachment of Zaslavsky's work, one must conclude that his use of the label neo-Stalinism is either inaccurate or loaded, or both.

THE OTHER MAJOR PROBLEM that requires comment is the prospect ahead for Soviet society (or, more precisely, for the relationship of state and society). As Zaslavsky posits the choices, they are between (1) a "neo-Stalinist" policy of law and order cou-

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pled with political expansionism and a lowering of living standards for Soviet workers and peasants; and (2) a "technocratic" orientation that in effect focuses on economic reforms as a way out of the current stagnation. This second formula would be sold to the leadership by a technocratic elite: economic pluralism as a way of forestalling pressures for political pluralism. Leaving aside Zaslavsky's effort to find a "class base" for these two prescriptions, one can only welcome his good sense in omitting at least two prospects that, in recent years, others have taken seriously: the internal collapse of

Vladimir Voinovich

Dr. Zhivago in the Soviet Union?

Vladimir Voinovich was born in 1932 in Soviet Central Asia. His early work experience, though limiting his formal education, gave him intimate knowledge of the daily realities of Soviet life. He has written short stories, novels, plays, and even a song, Fourteen Minutes To Go, *which became the unofficial anthem of the Soviet cosmonauts. His major works are available in English:* The Life and Extraordinary Adventures of Private Ivan Chonkin, In Plain Russian, The Ivankiad, *and* Pretender to the Throne. *Since 1981 he has been living near Munich.* — R. L.

There are rumors afoot that *Doctor Zhivago* will finally be published in Moscow. A correspondent for the London *Times* has termed these rumors sensational. If, on the whole, rumors can be termed sensational, then we never had any shortage of them—the less trustworthy news there is, the more utterly fantastic rumors there are.

People either say that a flying saucer hovered over Petrozavodsk for a few hours or that some miracle healer has appeared who can telepathically cure someone ill with cancer thousands of miles away. Or that a foreigner has come to Moscow and is giving unsuspecting Muscovites poisoned T-shirts that, once on, can't be pulled off. People also said that Andropov, the late general secretary, loved jeans and read the American writer Jacqueline Susann in the original. Unfortunately, or fortunately, the distance between rumor and news is immense.

Rumors about a possible publication of Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* have also been in circulation. They've been flaring up and dying down for some 20 years now, if not more.

A brief reminder of the history of that novel on which Pasternak worked for many years: when he finished it in the '50s, he offered the manuscript to the magazine *Novy Mir*. It was rejected by the editorial board, which was headed by Konstantin Simonov at the time. In 1957 the novel was published in Russian by Feltrinelli, an Italian Communist publisher. In 1958, that is, just over a quarter of a century ago, the author of *Doctor Zhivago* was awarded the Nobel Prize. And that truly made for a sensation, which caught everyone by surprise, including the laureate himself. Pasternak sent a telegram to the Swedish Academy that had awarded him the prize and he expressed his feelings as follows: "I am infinitely grateful, touched, surprised, embarrassed."

The Soviet authorities could have subscribed to the latter two points for they too were surprised and embarrassed. Who's this Pasternak? Why wasn't Sholokhov given the prize (Sholokhov would be awarded the prize seven years later), or Fedin, or Mikhail Alekseev? Why some Pasternak whom the Soviet people have never even heard of?

Then all hell broke loose. The Soviet newspapers began to assail the gray-haired laureate with a stream of invective and mud-slinging. Writers and so-called simple working people inveighed against Pasternak. They called him anti-Soviet and an enemy of the people. The author of one letter wrote that he only knew Sholokhov and Fedin, good writers, but had no idea who this Pasternak was. Another expressed his feelings in verse:

> Pasternak
> is as dark and slack
> as an empty sack.

The students of the Literary Institute walked past Pasternak's dacha shouting curses Chinese-style and smashing bottles of ink, issued to them beforehand, on his fence. The secretary of the Komsomol Central Committee and future chairman of the KGB, Semichastny, called Pasternak a pig and declared that the Soviet government would have no objections if Pasternak left the country.

The meeting held by the Writers' Union was a shameful, pogromlike affair. One after the other, those engineers of human souls mounted the podium to shout hysterically that Pasternak hated the Soviet people, was a lackey of international imperialism, that to speak his name was like making an indecent noise in public, and that Pasternak's place was on the garbage heap.

What motivated those writers? Hatred, spite, envy, and fear. The belief that if they didn't trample him today, they'd be trampled themselves tomorrow.

Two elderly and still more or less respected writers, the poet Ilya Selvinsky, and the literary critic Viktor Shklovsky, were in Yalta at the time. Why didn't they use that opportunity to avoid taking

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the system, and its far-reaching political democratization. There are no serious grounds to foresee either of these. But what about those that Zaslavsky sketches out?

While it may be useful analytically to describe them as "ideal types," in fact they are neither exhaustive alternatives nor mutually exclusive. If there is a label that would describe much of the domestic policy of the Brezhnev years and apparently also under Chernenko, it is "muddling through," rather than either of Zaslavsky's prescriptions. Andropov, on the other hand, sought to

part in the general persecution of the man? They were well aware of who Pasternak was as a poet. Selvinsky, after all, had called Pasternak his teacher. But the fear that had eaten away at their souls during the years of Stalin's terror gave them no peace. They were afraid of being accused of hiding behind the Crimean mountains at a key moment in history. They weren't, however, afraid of disgracing their names forever. And so, panting from the heat and the steep incline, gulping heart medicine on the way, they dragged themselves up the mountain to the post office to send a telegram condemning their colleague.

Selvinsky's exploit did not pass unnoticed. He who had written: "I have not hammered a single nail in my life" became the subject of one of the most brilliant epigrams in Russian literature:

> All's behind you now, the glory and disgrace,
> Envy and dull malice remain.
> When they crucified your teacher,
> You walked over to hammer in the first nail.

The writers who spoke out at the meeting in 1958 promised the author of *Doctor Zhivago* a place on the garbage dump of history. Since then 26 years have passed and the creator of the novel died quite some time ago. Many of his persecutors have gone to the next world as well. But *Doctor Zhivago* continues to be published and republished in many languages. Even now it is one of the most popular books in the world. It is published in Russian, and despite the vigilance of the border guards, copies end up in the Soviet Union and are distributed by those who speculate in books and by unselfish lovers of literature.

ALL RIGHT, LET'S ASSUME that it'll be published now even in the Soviet Union. What would that bear comparison to as an event? Perhaps the publication of the serialized version of Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* in 1967. But there's an essential difference. Bulgakov's novel seemed to return from oblivion, to rise from the ashes, thereby confirming the author's principal hope—that manuscripts don't burn. *Doctor Zhivago* would not cause a sensation like that. That novel is alive and has been read by millions. And, no matter what, it would be published in the Soviet Union in a paltry edition, of which most would be sent abroad. And those who are destroying literature today would keep some of the copies for themselves. An even smaller number would be sent to the Writers' Union bookstore and allocated to those with membership cards as a reward for good behavior. And a very few would be sent to the bookstores in Moscow and a couple of other cities.

At one point a collection of poems by Osip Mandelstam, who had been martyred in prison, was also published. Speaking to a group of intellectuals in Leningrad, a party lecturer explained that the volume had been published to demonstrate our freedom of the press to the West. "You should understand," he confided to the audience, "that we have published Mandelstam in order to shut their mouths." "Shut ours too!" came a voice from the audience.

The same thing is happening now. A chosen few will receive the legal edition of Pasternak. And, as before, the general reader will have his mouth shut with volumes by Markov, Sartakov, Bondarev, or Chakovsky. If any outstanding talent should appear today, he will also be persecuted, stifled, and left to rot by so-called literary public opinion, front-rank workers, and specialists from the KGB. And, at some point, some 20 or 30 years after his death, they'll forgive him for having lived on earth and publish the books they're spitting on today.

All the same, I'd like to end on an optimistic note. The self-assured Soviet authorities think that they control everything, including literature. But the literature they control, encourage, favor, and reward has no greater success than the agriculture they also control. There are many Heroes of Socialist Labor in both fields but the actual results are deplorable. Nevertheless, the situation in literature is better than in agriculture.

From time to time, not very often, despite everything, writers do appear who can be stifled, left to rot, and killed but who cannot be governed because they are ungovernable. And it is those writers who create the books that must not be destroyed. Writers die as do their oppressors, and states fall, but the books remain. And those who govern literature, no matter what ranks they may hold, should remember that true literature is beyond their control, that anyone encroaching on its sovereignty will suffer inevitable defeat. The case of *Doctor Zhivago* demonstrates this with utter clarity.

Translated from Russian by RICHARD LOURIE □

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combine elements of both greater social discipline and modest economic reform from above.

More important perhaps, as suggested earlier, law and order need not mean Stalinist terror; and in particular, domestic discipline need by no means require foreign adventurism. Of late, a thoroughly misleading notion has been propounded by a number of people who ought to know better: that the nature of the Soviet system and especially its failures at home organically drive it to expand, if only to validate its legitimacy and to manufacture the enemies it needs to justify its regime. In fact, the record suggests that in the periods of greatest difficulties at home (for example, 1921, 1930, 1937, 1953) Soviet foreign policy has tended to be relatively conciliatory. And one would be hard-pressed to invent a credible scenario in which a member of the Politburo, after reciting a litany of problems, shortfalls, bottlenecks, and worries, would appeal to his fellow-members, "... and therefore, comrades, let us invade Afghanistan [or Ethiopia, or Pakistan]." That foreign adventures might require greater sacrifices at home is one thing; that efforts at tightening law and order at home would require expansionism abroad is a very different and, I believe, misleading assumption.

Zaslavsky's discussion does not deal with the possible impact of external variables. Richard Pipes claims to believe that U.S. pressure can force the Soviets to make fundamental changes in resource allocation and thereby to shift from a heavily militarized economy to one far more concerned with consumer goods (which would make the U.S. feel safer). Clever perhaps; but in fact such a strategy is naive and impossible. The result of even the milder version, which the current Administration has sought to implement, is a tightening up in the Soviet Union: U.S. policy in the 1980s has tended to worsen the prospects of reform in the Soviet Union significantly (just as in the 1970s détente had made reforms more feasible in Eastern Europe). Ironically, if Soviet policy has helped Ronald Reagan, he in turn has helped the Soviet leaders consolidate and dig in. The question that remains unanswered, here or elsewhere, is what significant changes in economic policy and practice could be implemented in the Soviet Union, regardless of pressures imposed from abroad.

But it may be misleading to focus so heavily on these questions in discussing Zaslavsky's six essays. If they have no obvious political bottom line, and if some of them are open to argument, they are nonetheless serious, original, and very welcome in a field that badly needs some new skilled and careful craftsmen. □

Oliver Conant

Should Government Support the Arts?

THE DEMOCRATIC MUSE: VISUAL ARTS AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST, by Edward C. Banfield. New York: Basic Books. 244 pp. $15.95.

Edward Banfield, a political scientist at Harvard, is best known for his acerbic treatment of liberal hopes for urban renewal. In *The Democratic Muse* he provides a conservative analysis of the situation of the visual arts in America, arguing that arts spending does not fall within the "proper sphere of government" specified by the Founding Fathers, and advocating the abolition of government funding for the arts. (In 1981, while serving on Reagan's Task Force on the Arts and Humanities, Banfield urged "the liquidation of the endowments and the complete withdrawal of the federal government from the cultural scene." Most of his fellow appointees merely accepted the president's inevitable budget cuts.) Banfield's polemical, at times tiresomely contentious book is aimed at chic culture establishment types—museum administrators, managers of the arts, endowment officials—the powers that be of the art world in Washington and New York.

Against the advocacy of continued or increased public subsidy for art by this group—Banfield is not above calling them "special interests"—he recommends a laissez-faire approach. We learn a good deal more about the failures and inconsistencies of federal arts administration than about specific features of this approach. But Banfield does pause long enough to envision an entirely nonsubsidized museum, the result of "private decentralized choice," the "use of the market as a means of using resources efficiently, including of course those related to art" and to extol the benefits of commercial art copying businesses, such as Nelson Rockefeller's.

Neither Banfield's economic arguments, at least as they relate to museums, nor his art copy scheme are very convincing or innovative. U.S. art museums, certainly by comparison with their counterparts in Europe, are notoriously underfunded by the state. The private subsidies Banfield calls for are now very much in existence. And if his aim is to

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democratize the arts, one can think of many more effective ways to bring large numbers of people to the experience of art than by charging fancy prices for photographic reproductions; for example, the presentation of art works via mass media, such as film and video.

But does Banfield really favor democratizing the arts? Despite the populist tinge of his conservatism, on the whole I would say he takes a dim view of making contemporary art more widely available. Not without evidence, he considers many of the projects funded by the NEA to be nihilist in tendency or actually nihilist. Some contemporary art, he suggests, may be so subversive of "moral and political values" as to justify a public interest in suppressing it. While he pulls back from recommending such a Platonic measure, it's clear that he doesn't like a lot of what passes for art these days.

One cannot fault Banfield for feeling this way. A lot of what passes for art these days is rubbish. Nor do I fault him, as no doubt sophisticates of the art world have, for daring to oppose the prevailing standardlessness with the investigation into aesthetics and the proper definition of art that he undertakes in a chapter entitled "But Is It Art?" Probably no serious cultural criticism can be conducted without some attempt to arrive at definitions and standards. The answer Banfield returns to the favorite philistine question, "But is it art?" is no, unless it "has the capacity to engender in a receptive viewer an aesthetic experience." Now as a definition this is singularly unhelpful. My wife's face has this capacity for me as viewer, but it is not a work of art; neither are many other beautiful things. Banfield's definition manages somehow to be at once too constricting and too elastic; it leaves out the many things art also is, and perhaps is most powerfully—art as argument, as "equipment for living," to quote Kenneth Burke.

Banfield's use of his definition is intentionally narrowing. He argues that the endowments cannot properly justify their subsidies by referring to the value of art, since that resides entirely in its "engendering aesthetic experience"; but much of what they support has nothing to do with aesthetic experience. Thus when the NEH funds the Tutankhamen show, it is really, according to Banfield's single notion of aesthetics, funding the "extra-aesthetic" activity of the art historians and curators who brought the exhibition to the public, activity that cannot be justified by an appeal to art or aesthetic experience. The possibility that one could derive aesthetic pleasure from Egyptian art seems not to have occurred to him.

Banfield is more impressive as a historian of political and administrative histories of arts funding in the U.S. than on aesthetic questions, where he exhibits all the ill-considered bumptiousness of an outsider impatient with nuance. He is partisan, but what he relates is of interest. Predictably, he scants the period of the New Deal. He notes that the mission undertaken by the WPA to provide relief sat uneasily with the aim of raising the level of national taste. Since widespread government support of the arts is part of the legacy of the New Deal, the observation is hardly sufficient. Many, perhaps most, of the unemployed artists assisted by the WPA were not greatly gifted people. But it should not be forgotten that Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock were also among the beneficiaries, as all of us are now of their genius.

Still, Banfield is both knowing and funny about the political dealing and back-stabbing that have gone on in Washington since the passage of the National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965. What he has to relate of the self-justifying and fuzzy-headed statements of purpose put out by the culture-bureaucrats helps to explain the extraordinary animus he bears them and their programs.

Also of interest are Banfield's remarks on the state of arts education in the schools—which, like much else about the schools, is undeniably a sorry one. He has some fine satiric things to say about the invasion of traditional crafts by university-trained "craftspeople." In the chapter entitled " 'Fine' versus 'Applied' Art," he tries to further the cause of applied art, which he supports with the names of such early crusaders as John Ruskin and, despite the political incongruity, William Morris.

Banfield tends to exaggerate: "Objects that are at once useful and pleasing to the eye may for all we know help to give meaning to everyday activities, and, in this way, to life itself, and by so doing make fine art of less value." This simply defies common sense. If I eat at a traditional, hand-made mahogany table, which I find both practical and pleasing, will the Van Dongen canvas or Dufy watercolors hanging on the walls be thereby of any less value to me? My satisfaction in these works of (fine) art may be of a different order from the pleasure I derive from the (applied) art or artistry that went into fashioning my table, but I am baffled as to why one of these satisfactions should conflict with or reduce the other. The oddly titled chapter on museums, "Art versus the Museum," displays an unseemly combination of ignorance and suspiciousness. The basic charge, which follows from Banfield's definition of art, is that art muse-

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ums are perversely engaged in "extra-aesthetic pursuits":

> If the proper function of an art museum is to collect and display works of art and, beyond that, to make the experience of art more widely and intensely felt, then the art museum has failed. Although it has afforded countless moments of aesthetic enjoyment to countless viewers, it has mainly misrepresented the nature of art, put obstacles in the way of experiencing it, and encouraged the substitution of pecuniary and curiosity values for aesthetic ones. Because it has so long been the principal intermediary between visual art and the public, the art museum must bear much responsibility for widespread confusion about the nature of art.

The prosecutorial illogicality here—if the art museum *has* "afforded countless moments of aesthetic enjoyment to countless viewers," then how has it "failed" so completely?—is typical of the chapter, indeed of the book. It also dramatizes how oddly assorted Banfield's definition of art is when we consider the large and various satisfactions granted by the art museum to its visitors.

Banfield accuses the art museum of displaying "things that belong together from a historical standpoint even when that has entailed putting them where what is artistically best is hard to find and perhaps even harder to experience as art." This statement betrays a studied incomprehension of the purpose of collections of art in museums such as New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. That purpose is primarily not to display isolated masterpieces, the "best" painting, but to provide an encyclopedic context for understanding the traditions that have contributed to making great paintings great.

THE BOOK LAYS CLAIM to the Madisonian democratic way and attacks all proponents of arts spending as innovators, even enemies of democracy. But it is Banfield's position that is historically novel. The history of state support of the arts is as old as human civilization. Like most of human history, it includes mainly non- or antidemocratic states or rulers, but also Periclean Athens, a democracy that sponsored the plays of Sophocles and the statues of Phidias.

Democratic governments today are alone in the world in many things; supporting the arts for no ulterior motive other than the cultural and, yes, the aesthetic enrichment of citizens is not the least significant or precious of these. The conclusion reached by the critic Richard Hoggart in an eloquent essay, "Culture and Its Ministers," that public support of the arts in the West at its optimum is based on the "effort to arrive at an open, discriminating individual consciousness, whether in the artist or in those who admire his work" should cheer all true democrats. Neither by the Communist governments, which use the arts as a weapon, nor in many of the new Third World regimes, which use the arts to enforce or invent attractive national identities, is the idea of a discriminating individual consciousness respected or even recognized.

These considerations provide both cause for some satisfaction and grounds to reject Banfield's arguments. There is little cause for complacency, however. The protests in *The Democratic Muse* against subsidizing inferior art created merely for its power to shock are not unfounded. I fail to see, however, how simply eliminating the arts bureaucracies will help matters. After all, it is the arts market, more than Washington, that has promoted the worst excesses of avant-garde art—and yet the art market is capitalism in one of its purest (and silliest) modes.

Banfield's book is bumptious and wrong-headed, but it does force a number of questions on the reader. Why do people go to museums, after all? Why do they admire contemporary art? There can be little doubt that many not very elevating things can be said on this score. Banfield says some of them, in my view wrongly and ungenerously. But it can also be said, without undue piety, that we go to museums for a variety of urgent and important reasons, all unspecified by Banfield's "aesthetic experience." We go for a sense of the past, denied us by the aggressive pastlessness of modern American life; we go, in our status-obsessed, selfish, class-conscious, and culturally undernourished society, to get out of ourselves, to transcend our time-bound standards of taste; we go for insight into other ways of life and thought. We love the work of first-rate living artists in part because, as Harold Rosenberg once remarked, talented artists *know themselves*, and we are hungry for that self-knowledge; we hope to share and learn from it. Like the legacy beyond price in our museums, that self-knowledge is an affirmation of our humanity, which the public is and will continue to be grateful for, respect—and support. □

COMING—IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

The Bishops and the Economy

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LETTERS

Nicaragua: I

Editors:

Juan E. Corradi's article "Nicaragua—Can It Find Its Own Way?" places this Central American country in a clear perspective. Corradi could not be more correct in claiming that "the paramount problems of Central America are those of the Third World. . . . "

The Sandinista revolution is the physical reflection of a whole people's desire to seek a fuller life and reject the authoritarianism of the Somoza regime. Social change is to be engineered not only by government leaders, but by the citizen on the street. This is acutely understood and reflected by Corradi. To overcome poverty and backwardness is a difficult task, but one that the Sandinista National Liberation Front has placed at the forefront. Nicaraguan leaders have not attempted to shun this responsibility.

Nicaragua has made mistakes, but with the mistakes has come learning. With time and without external intrusion, Nicaragua can find its own way.

ERIC BLEDSOE
West Lafayette, Indiana □

Nicaragua: II

Editors:

"Gimme a place to stand," said Archimedes, "and I can move the world." Give Juan E. Corradi a place to stand, and he can analyze the Nicaraguan revolution—and where he's standing is the place of bourgeois privilege. This is evident in his condescending words about the Third World: "Cultural backwardness" dismisses all the achievements of folk culture, such as music, art, and crafts, and such Nicaraguan "high" culture figures as Ruben Darío.

As for "social disarticulation," a thoroughgoing revolution strikes the rest of the world as pretty articulate. Corradi judges the revolution through the lens of bourgeois consumerism. He finds it awful that toothpaste is not available: what does toothpaste mean to a peasant family that has never had dental care? He finds it awful that peasant and working-class families subsist on a diet of beans and rice, with insufficient meat and fish. What does that mean to those families who are getting enough beans and rice for the first time in their lives?

One notices he makes no mention of the tremendous achievements of, for instance, literacy campaigns or improved medical and social services—carried out with Uncle Sam breathing down. More serious is his analysis "no bourgeois, no democracy." Yet he himself quotes a bourgeois spokesman who is angry because of "the march of the riff-raff" (that's the Nicaraguan people) and because his "birthright" has been snatched away—that birthright being the right to exploit the people in the place of Somoza who was hated not because he was an exploiter, but because he refused to share out the loot. And *this* is the class that Corradi counts on for democracy in Nicaragua? The class that, in a *New York Times* magazine article last August, was willing to welcome the U.S. army to shore up its privileges?

The sooner that class goes on the dust heap of history, where it so definitely belongs, the sooner the "riff-raff" can get on with building a new society.

JOANNE FORMAN
Taos, New Mexico □

JUAN E. CORRADI Replies

It is nearly impossible for an author to satisfy a critic who, more through inability than mischief, entirely misreads his text. His reiterations will, in all likelihood, leave the critic unruffled, and they will bore the other, more perceptive audience. I shall therefore be brief.

What Joanne Forman objects to is objectivity. She belongs to the legion of those who, facing a revolution, consider anything other than unthinking endorsement a betrayal, or at best the unconscious distortion of a "class enemy." To her, my terms to characterize the predicament of Third World countries sound like "condescending buzz words," as if she did not hear the louder buzz of her own clichés (e.g., "bourgeois privilege"), which come from the hive of Vulgar Marxists. The term "cultural backwardness" is not used to dismiss the achievements of folk culture—although in dependent Third World nations much of it is phoney and condescendingly glorified by outside profiteers and consumers. Nor is it to minimize the achievements of such great poets as Darío—although when the modernist Darío was singing to white marble in Paris and Buenos Aires, his homeland wallowed in mud and malaria. It is to point to such obvious facts as a staggering rate of illiteracy. It was in order to overcome such cultural backwardness that the San-

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dinistas launched an enthusiastic and successful mass literacy campaign, as the Cubans did 20 years before. And it is to overcome such backwardness that neighborhood committees today encourage families to vaccinate their children. But Ms. Forman has—unbeknown to her—a point: the attempt to correct "cultural backwardness" may lead to arrogant excess in the hands of revolutionaries who have little respect for native customs and rights. Had she cared to read my article to the end, she would have found in footnote 11 an account of Sandinista mistreatment of the natives of the Atlantic Coast—a fact that I deplore and the Sandinistas now regret.

Ms. Forman totally misconstrues some of my accounts. I do not find it "awful" that toothpaste is not available to "a peasant family": I merely report that the foreign visitor is besieged by urban workers in search of such simple consumer goods. I was neither surprised nor appalled: I have yet to visit a "socialist" country with no black market for such items. What did disturb me was that, upon delivering a tube of toothpaste, I had to sign an affidavit stating that it was a personal gift, so that the person to whom I gave it would not be fired and/or arrested. I do not find it "awful" that basic foodstuffs are rationed: there is scarcity and a war emergency. What disturbed me was that, for some quite poor people, whether they got their weekly chicken or not depended on how loudly they were heard shouting officially approved slogans.

On the issue of the prospects for democracy in Nicaragua, I will restate succinctly, for the benefit of Ms. Forman, what I think my lengthier analysis in the article makes plain to other readers. I do not for a moment foster the illusion that the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie, as it is presently constituted, is either strong or mature enough to be counted on to guarantee democracy. In fact, I take the trouble to spell out a scenario for what would happen if this group were conceded all that it demands: it would result in instability and eventually in what I call "bloody reaction." But I also believe that if that group—which even the Sandinistas concede has an important and legitimate function in Nicaraguan society—is sent, as Ms. Forman wishes in her outworn rhetoric, to "the dust heap of history," the chances for real democracy are foreclosed entirely. Between these two iron horns, I think a compromise is, at this late hour, still possible: genuine concessions on the part of the ruling party without giving up power, and freer elections than the ones that took place last November. I call this a "sham democracy"—but one with some chances for improvement. I am perfectly willing to live with that and even to consider it progress for Nicaragua. I do not share in the official American hypocrisy that consists in demanding of the Nicaraguans what it does not demand of, say, the Mexicans, let alone of some of its shadier allies in Central America. If I must be scolded for calling a spade a spade, so be it. Politics—and especially revolutionary politics—shall remain for me the art of the possible; not, as with Ms. Forman, an exercise in self-obfuscation. □

On Central America — and Nicaragua

Editors:

My wife and I are among those who feel that there are serious distortions in Gabriel Zaid's account—"Salvadorans Go to the Ballot Box," in the Fall 1984 *Dissent*—of the situation in Central America.

Last spring we spent a week in Honduras and two weeks in Nicaragua, including three days with the Witness for Peace program at Jalapa on the frontier. The trip was sponsored by the Fellowship for Reconciliation, and it put us in contact with people across the political spectrum in both countries.

Mr. Zaid echoes the line of the Reagan administration that the Sandinistas are nothing but a Marxist-Leninist party imposing its will on a resistant populace. I am anti-Marxist-Leninist. Our experience contradicted Mr. Zaid's, however. We found strong support for the Sandinistas from Catholic leaders of the Christian-based communities—the Maryknolls, Jesuits, Capuchins. We also found the bishops in opposition. We found the leadership of the Protestant consortium in strong support.

We worked in the fields on a cooperative four miles from the border, with people from the co-op having guns to defend themselves against the contras. Ask yourself why the Sandinistas would be putting guns in the hands of the peasants close to the contras if they hated the government. Which other Central American country will put arms in the hands of its people?

Arthur Wirth
Clayton, Missouri □

Resigns

Dear Colleagues:

I hereby resign from the Editorial Board.

Although I remain committed to the goals of the magazine, I have found myself unable to devote time to serving as a functioning member of the Board. Since a job opportunity will now take me away from New York, my ability to do ongoing work as an editor will be hampered further. Both the magazine and I will be better served if I play the role of active contributor rather than inactive editor.

Jack Clark □

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"Our Unions Are Under Attack"

Editors:

Victor Gotbaum's defense of unions ("Our Unions Are Under Attack," *Dissent*, Spring 1984) is cogent as far as it goes; but he fails to see, or at least to acknowledge, that there is a growing opposition to unions that is not caused by changes in the economy but by the actions of union leaders. Most obvious is the self-perpetuating bureaucracy that sees opposition within a union as an enemy force to be dislodged rather than as a necessary part of the democratic process. Even when such bureaucracies take the form of outright dictatorships, ruling by violence, the leaders of the AFL–CIO have not been particularly forceful in taking steps to remove such officers. Ironically, it is the federal government—Congress and the courts—on whom union members have to rely for their basic rights.

The second factor (almost as obvious but much more difficult to deal with) is that workers are beginning to feel that the economic gains of some workers result in economic losses for the rest. Even when workers, both in and out of unions, recognize their common interest with those on strike, there is also a recognition that higher wages, let us say, for auto workers and teachers mean higher prices for our cars and higher taxes on our homes. (That we can own cars and homes because unions have helped us earn more does not negate our sense that we are also consumers, part of the "public," as the newspapers tell us.)

Like Gotbaum, I too am confident that unions are here to stay. But they are more likely to reverse their decline if their supporters, particularly their leaders, face the truth that unions are losing their influence more by their own actions than by technological changes.

Lawrence W. Hyman
Ridgewood, N.J. □

"As Dull as Freud"

Editors:

Dissent runs willfully in blinders.

We need new thinking and new ideas, and you don't seem to have any. Are you aware that Anne Frank was the way she was because she attended a good (they're few) Montessori School? Montessori and Tertullian discovered the same laws of formation for human character.

We're heading straight for nuclear war and you seem to be back in some other, blander century. Jews I know aren't like this! They read Mirabehn and Martin Buber and Jane Roberts.

I think you're stuck in two dimensions. You're as dull as Freud! As immature as Jung.

Marion Wylie
Oakland, California □

Student Publication

Editors:

I would like to call the attention of your readers to *Consider*, a publication from the University of Michigan. *Consider* represents the commitment of a few students to the discussion of significant issues of the day. It's our small contribution to the battle against the apathy so prevalent today.

For information about subscriptions, please write to *Consider*, 4317 Michigan Union, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48109.

Jeff Spinner
Ann Arbor, Michigan □

What Solutions for West Bank Arabs?

Editors:

Yoram Ben-Porath's essay, in the Fall 1984 issue, on economic relations between Jews and Arabs—especially West Bank Arabs—was most interesting and raised several important issues. Unfortunately, it was also unclear on some central points and thus remains unconvincing. The problem he outlined, the convergence of "class" (position in the work force and family income) and ethnicity, is certainly an important one. His solution for rectifying it is unrealistic and based on moral argument rather than economic analysis.

He calls for the countervailing power of an "Arab political entity," a "sovereign entity," to look after the economic welfare of the Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza. That suggests either an independent state or the incorporation of the occupied territories into Jordan (an Arab entity). Since the Palestinian liberation movement is nothing if not a nationalist movement with a long and bloody history of seeking the overthrow of the current Jordanian government, the second version of the solution is not likely to prove stable. And, since the leadership of the Arab world has explicitly excluded Jordan from representing the Palestinian people, it is not even a solution that is available unless and until the rest of the Arab world changes its political and diplomatic views. The problems with an independent state are too well known to need repeating.

Annexation of the West Bank is already a *fait accompli*. It can be made less oppressive for the Arab residents by the creation of some sort of federation

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status with Jordan—a solution that could also lessen the moral tension for Israeli liberals that Ben-Porath recognizes as being created by the nature of the present relationship—but a sovereign Arab political entity exercising the sort of full independence that could lead to a severing of ties between the West Bank and pre-1967 Israel is not in the cards. Nor, from a purely economic point of view, would it be preferable to formal annexation.

ROBERT BLAIR
Arlington, Virginia □

"Neoliberals' Hesitation Dance"

A Reply by JIM SLEEPER

I've had some reservations about my "Neoliberals' Hesitation Dance" essay in the spring *Dissent*, but I can't say that Louis F. Cooper's complaining letter in the summer issue helped much to clarify them. Fortunately, conversations with others, including neoliberals, have been more constructive, and I look forward to more of them.

As for Cooper's only substantive point, which is that I'm wrong when speaking of "the chilly Harvard College of the 1970s" as an incubator of neoliberal sensibility, I was there during those years and observed the socialist courses and activities he mentions. It was as nothing compared to the dominant sensibility, which sundered all connection between most students' own upward mobility and any sense of the general welfare. Activists bemoaned this depressing spirit all the time.

So did embryonic neoliberals, but they weren't much drawn to the community of progressive scholars and students as an alternative. I'm not sure I blame them entirely, given the often formulaic, self-enclosed, and sometimes self-indulgent nature of the campus left's claims to broader social vision. On the other hand, I fear that neoliberals were deaf to those claims partly because they hadn't the courage of their own latent conviction that something was wrong with the way we were all being taught to perceive and master the world around us. The rewards and rigors of that mastery were attractive, and they succumbed, with the misgivings that make them neoliberals. That isn't to say we can't learn from their criticism, as I suggest in several examples. □

Readers International

Editors:

I would like to announce in your pages the launching of *Readers International*, a new nonprofit publishing program that will bring into English outstanding works of contemporary literature from outside the developed West. *Readers International* is a unique alliance of writers, translators, and editors the world over. Its advisers and supporters include Dennis Brutus, Ariel Dorfman, Robert Fitzgerald, Eduardo Galeano, Gregory Rabassa, Nawal El Saadawi, Edward Said, and Josef Skvorecky.

We hope to help writers from the Third World and Eastern Europe fight the silence imposed on them at home. Despite the interest in a few prominent foreign writers, little contemporary literature from outside Western Europe is published here in the U.S.—less than 1 percent in the latest available translation-count by the Library of Congress. It even took a subsidy to translate *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

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DOROTHY CONNELL,
Executive Editor □

NOTEBOOK *(continued from p. 118)*

bellies might have qualms when faced with one of the most popular game situations—a hypothetical Soviet invasion of West Germany, complete with tactical nuclear weapons.

I have played and enjoyed these games, including the latter, for many years, so once again I must raise the question without presuming to answer it. I suggest, however, that the symbolic problem of wargames goes back to the confusion of functions between game and tool—for the aggressions of wargames differ from those of chess in that they refer us out of the living room and back to the world. The fact that a person (such as myself) can fiercely (I'm tempted to say militantly) believe in the necessity for peace and disarmament and still enjoy playing with toy soldiers may simply be one of the piquant contradictions of our late-capitalist culture. Or it may indicate something darker about ourselves (myself); something we would rather not—but must—know. I can't decide. □

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